University of Alberta

Bacon's Bensalem: a study of the *New Atlantis*

by

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ABSTRACT

Francis Bacon's (1561-1626) *New Atlantis* describes Bensalem from the perspective of a European narrator who happens on her shores. Bensalem is an unknown, fictional regime, which has unprecedented technological capabilities. Although the *New Atlantis* initially may appear an unlikely avenue from which to question the consequences of the modern scientific project, Bensalem is the political entity which one the fathers of modern science created in order to elucidate the potential benefits and drawbacks associated with the pursuit of science. At what cost does a state dedicate itself to science? This thesis is a close reading of the text and attempts to highlight Bacon's three primary themes—religion, politics, science, and the relationships therein. Two fundamental questions are addressed: how are we to understand Bensalem? And, what is the 'new Atlantis'?

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

- **Introduction** 1
  - Bacon's Scientific Reform 3
  - The *New Atlantis* 6

- **Chapter One: At Sea** 16
  - We Sail From Peru 16
  - Lost Men 18
    - i. Psalm 107 19
    - ii. In the Beginning 22
  - Hope for Salvation 23
  - Considerations on the Departure from Peru and its Unexpected Consequences 23

- **Chapter Two: The Island** 27
  - The Scroll or First Communication 29
    - i. Symbols and their Consequences 31
    - ii. The Response of the Sailors 33
  - The Reverend Man 34
    - i. Are Ye Christians? 35
    - ii. The Oath to the Savior 37
    - iii. Piracy 38
    - iv. Shedding Blood 39
    - v. The Reverend Man's Explanation of his Behavior 41
  - Twice Paid 43
  - Considerations on the Island and the Islanders 44

- **Chapter Three: On Land** 47
  - The Strangers' House 50
    - i. Considerations on the Strangers' House 52
  - The Narrator's Speech 53
    - i. Friendship 54
    - ii. Know Thyself 55
    - iii. Jonah 56
    - iv. Purgatory 59
    - v. Conditions of their Stay 60
  - The Three-Day Seclusion 61
  - Considerations on the Strangers' House 62

- **Chapter Four: The Governor-Priest** 64
  - The First Conversation: the Islanders' Verdict 65
  - The Second Conversation: the Island's Conversion 73
    - i. Bensalem 74
    - ii. An Utterly Unknown Island 75
    - iii. Questions and Answers 76
    - iv. The Miracle 79
    - v. The Conversion Reconsidered 81
  - The Third Conversation: the History of Bensalem 91
    - i. Matters of Religion and Matters of Policy 93
    - ii. The Nautical History of the World 99

iii. The War with Atlantis 100
iv. Salomon's House 107
Implications of the Governor-Priest's Speeches 115
Considerations on the Governor-Priest's Speeches and their Impact Upon the Sailors 118

Chapter Five: The Feast of the Family 122
The First Two Days: Consultations with the Family 126
The Third Day: The Feast 128
i. The Mother 129
ii. The Three Parts of the Feast 130
i. The Contents of the Hymns 133
ii. The Blessings 138
Considerations on the Feast of the Family 141

Chapter Six: Joabin 144
The Narrator and Joabin's First Conversation 154
i. Joabin's Critique of European and Bensalemite Sexual Practices 155
ii. The Marriage Laws 161
iii. The Adam and Eve Pools 161
The Second Conversation 163
Considerations on the Narrator's Conversations with Joabin 164

Chapter Seven: The House of Salomon 167
An Audience with the Father 169
The Father of the House of Salomon's Speech 171
i. The End of the House 172
ii. The Preparations and Instruments of the House 173
iii. The Employments and Functions of the House 177
iv. The Ordinances and Rights of the House 182
The Father's Closing Remarks 186
Considerations on the House of Salomon 187

Conclusion 191
Bensalem 191
i. Religion and the Governor-Priest 191
ii. Politics and Joabin 198
iii. Science and the Father of Salomon's House 201
iv. Interpreting Bensalem 203
What is the New Atlantis? 206

Bibliography 214

INTRODUCTION

For the most part, modern man is content to enjoy the benefits accrued by science. In the twenty-first century, it is difficult to imagine a world without the amenities provided by technological enterprises. Scientific progress has enabled man to overcome many of the limitations imposed by nature, including human physiology: we can create artificial light; we have the ability to make hot things cold, and cold things hot; we have access to mass communications; we are capable of long-distance travel; and we have the knowledge to alter our bodies, replace malfunctioning (and unattractive) body parts, prolong our lives, and even modify our genetic form. In light of our extensive technological abilities, we believe that we have subjugated nature to human designs. That being said, our ability to control and manipulate nature is not without unforeseen results, both experimental and ethical. Scientists constantly and even accidentally are discovering things. As a result, man continually is adapting to the new natural truths that arise from research endeavors, and attempting to legislate, after the fact, the resultant technological developments.

Science has never been an unquestioned aspect of everyday life. When the modern approach to science was first proposed, it was met with considerable resistance. As man delves deeper into nature's truths, his understanding of the world, and of his place within it, are altered: religion is challenged, as man's understanding of the universe increases; politics, in turn, is forced to adapt to the ever increasing horizons of human existence. At the inception of the scientific project, proponents and opponents alike were positing similar questions: What is the proper relationship between science and politics? Is the pursuit of science compatible with religion? Who is to control scientific endeavors?

Modern man is dependent upon the comforts afforded by scientific research. Questions of the aforementioned type, while still of contemporary concern, are superceded by the desire to increase our technological abilities. Scrutinizing science—its method, its executions, and its impact—is impeded by the increasing demands for new amenities. In order even to pose such questions, a serious concern must first exist: the urgency of the answer and thus the necessity of the question must be recognized. In order to begin scrutinizing the scientific project—both its fruits and its poisons—we must deem our zealous faith in scientific truths, suspect. The fathers of the modern scientific project clearly foresaw both the potential advantages and the potential disadvantages of implementing scientific reform and cultivating scientific progress.[1]

Amongst his contemporaries, Francis Bacon (1561-1626) was considered one of the greatest minds of his time. A prolific philosopher and a notable statesman, Bacon profoundly influenced the development of our intellectual history. Yet, despite Bacon's contemporaneous fame, his work, for the most part, has been relegated to the dusty shelves of library basements. Musings on his personal life—his familial relations, the premature death of his father, his legal education, his political aspirations, and his fall from grace—while intriguing matters for gossip, are irrelevant for the purpose of this study.[2] In relation to this consideration, one's only concern ought to be Bacon's philosophical task and the resultant impact on our intellectual tradition.[3]

Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis* initially may appear an unlikely avenue from which to begin questioning science.[4] On the surface, the *New Atlantis* portrays the experiences of a fictional crew of European sailors who, having become lost in the Pacific Ocean, happen upon the shores of an unknown island, Bensalem.[5] As such, the narration includes a twofold account: first, the perceptions, experiences, and changes that the sailors undergo; and second, the history, development, and current political situation of Bensalem. This island, however, is not a regime typical of its time: the House of Salomon, the foremost institution on the island, is dedicated to scientific study.[6] The *New Atlantis*, then, recounted by Bacon's educated, European narrator, is a political study of an imaginary commonwealth with unprecedented technological expertise. Since it is an imaginary commonwealth, Bacon is not confined by historical limitations, human nature, or any of the other complications that face one who founds a regime. Bacon has constructed his narrator, the sailors, Bensalem, and the Bensalemites for the specific purposes of this text; however, the purpose served by the *New Atlantis* remains to be seen.

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[1] For a limited consideration of Bacon's understanding of the potential dangers which may arise in the pursuit of the scientific project, see Timothy Paterson, "The Politics of Baconian Science: An Analysis of Bacon's New Atlantis," diss., U of Toronto, 1982, 2; Timothy Paterson, "On the Role of Christianity in the Political Philosophy of Francis Bacon," *Polity* 19 (1987): 419-20; Jerry Weinberger, "On the Miracles in Bacon's *New Atlantis*," *Francis Bacon's New Atlantis: New Interdisciplinary Essays*, ed. Bronwen Price (New York: Manchester University Press, 2002) 110.

[2] For a detailed consideration of Bacon's personal and political life, see Nieves Mathews, *Francis Bacon: The History of Character Assassination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).

[3] I owe much of my understanding of Francis Bacon to David Innes, Laurence Lampert, Timothy Paterson, and Jerry Weinberger.

[4] For a more detailed consideration of the reasons that the *New Atlantis* is "a strange choice," see Jerry Weinberger, "Science and Rule in Bacon's Utopia: An Introduction to the Reading of the *New Atlantis*," *The American Political Science Review* 70 (1976): 866-69.

[5] Faulkner more succinctly states that the *New Atlantis* "is a taut fantasy in the form of a short but crammed adventure story." Robert K. Faulkner, "Visions and Powers: Bacon's Two-fold Politics of Progress," *Polity* 21 (1988): 112. Similarly, Lampert notes, "*New Atlantis* is overtly a fable, the account of a fabulous island in the Pacific whose possession of Baconian science made possible its long history of peaceful progress and its harmony of science and religion." Laurence Lampert, *Nietzsche and Modern Times* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993) 18. In like manner, Innes declares, "The literary function of the *New Atlantis* is to accomplish precisely the task with which, at the end of the story, the narrator is charged: to proclaim the possibilities, and thus the hope, of the new science." David C. Innes, "Bacon's *New Atlantis*: The Christian Hope and the Modern Hope," *Interpretation* 22:1 (1994): 4.

Bacon envisioned a world very different from and even hostile to the world in which he lived. Levying harsh criticism against the historical approach to learning and the educational institutions of the seventeenth century, Bacon sought to set the whole project anew. Adequately elaborating upon Bacon's project is a task unto itself. Given the parameters of the present undertaking, a rudimentary, albeit incomplete consideration of Bacon's project is necessary. Appropriately, this consideration must begin with two preliminary questions: what is Bacon's project, and within this project, where is the *New Atlantis* situated?

Bacon's Scientific Reform

Based on his own account, Bacon undertook a project of unprecedented proportions. Dissatisfied with the then current state of learning, Bacon decided to begin again. He sought not only to propose a theoretical reform of intellectual pursuits, but also to enact a practical reform—Bacon believed that he was reforming the intellectual trajectory of man:

> Being convinced that the human intellect makes its own difficulties, not using the true helps which are at man's disposal soberly and judiciously; whence follows manifold ignorance of things, and by reason of that ignorance mischiefs innumerable; he thought all trial and error should be made, whether that commerce between the mind of man and the nature of things, which is more precious than anything on earth, or at least than anything that is of the earth, might by any means be restored to its perfect and original condition.[7]

Bacon's critique of intellection involves a scathing analysis of the deficiencies in human learning. He determined that ignorance, laziness, and ineptitude had caused men's intellectual capacities to atrophy. In a single individual, such behavior, although unfortunate, is not irreparable. However, when allowed to progress unchecked, such rampant, widespread deterioration causes a languishing erudite class and a stultification of learning.[8]

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[6] According to Paterson, "The *New Atlantis*...provides Bacon's clearest picture of true science properly established in society." Timothy Paterson, "The Secular Control of Scientific Power," *Polity* 21, (1989): 458. Similarly, Faulkner notes, "The *New Atlantis* may be Bacon's most comprehensive political work.... [I]t shows the organization of science and scientists and ranks science among the various human polities." Faulkner 115.

[7] Francis Bacon, *The Great Instauration, New Atlantis and the Great Instauration*, ed. Jerry Weinberger, rev. edition (Wheeling: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1989) Procemium 1.

In *The Advancement of Learning*, Bacon targets three specific types of men as perpetrators of offences against the dignity of learning:

> I think good to deliver [learning] from the discredits and disgraces which it hath received, all from ignorance; but ignorance severally disguised, appearing sometimes in the zeal and jealousy of Divines; sometimes in the severity and arrogance of Politiques; and sometimes in the errors and imperfections of learned men themselves.[9]

It is not without reason, then, that the three primary themes of the *New Atlantis* are religion, politics, and science. By presupposing the perfection of their intellectual accomplishments—those that are religious, political, and scientific—the men of Bacon's time denigrated the very act of learning. If man believes that he has come to the answers of the most important questions, what is the purpose of continuing to ask questions and genuinely to seek answers? In like manner, if one believes that he has discovered the secrets of nature and the uses thereof, what is the purpose of probing deeper? Within this mindset, then, one which purports to have discovered the secrets of nature, research becomes obsolete. And yet, preeminent faith in scientific discoveries does not preclude Bacon's contemporaries from superficially continuing to delve into nature.

Precisely this approach to science—one undertaken not for the sake of knowing, but for the sake of doing—is the problem with the state of learning in Bacon's time. Intellectual undertakings, according to Bacon, are thus defined by their repetition, stagnation, and superficiality:

> For let a man look carefully into all that variety of books with which the arts and sciences abound, he will find everywhere repetitions of the same thing, varying in the method of treatment, but not new in substance, insomuch that the whole stock, numerous as it appears at first view, proves on examination to be but scanty....[T]hat they stand almost at a stay, without receiving any augmentation worthy of the human race; insomuch that many times not only what was asserted once is asserted still, but what was a question once is a question still, and instead of being resolved by discussion is only fixed and fed.[10]

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[8] Here is a man who, despite the "arduous and difficult" nature of the task, set himself "to try the whole thing anew upon a better plan, and to commence a total reconstruction of sciences, arts, and all human knowledge, raised upon the proper foundations." Bacon, *Great Instauration* 2.

[9] Francis Bacon, *The Advancement of Learning*. ed. G.W. Kitchen, intro. Jerry Weinberger (Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books, Inc., 2001) I.i.1.

[10] Bacon, *Great Instauration* 8.

Books, arts, and science had become a forum for facile reiteration. Statuesque, they "stand… worshipped and celebrated, but not moved or advanced;"[11] how does one begin to demolish these effigies to human learning?

Using the metaphor of a building, in order to achieve progress the "pulling down and demolishing" of human understanding must be accompanied by a reconstruction.[12] First, the constructions of regnant understanding must be toppled and the debris removed. Contrary to the then current state of learning, Bacon encouraged his contemporaries to reassess their methodological approach to learning:

> consider what are the true ends of knowledge, and that they seek it not either for pleasure of the mind, or for contention, or for superiority to others, or for profit, or fame, or power, or any of these inferior things; but for the benefit and use of life; and that they perfect and govern it in charity.[13]

Thus, according to Bacon, human knowledge must be undertaken for beneficent reasons and the utilization of life. Second, as with all new regimes, Bacon's new science requires a new foundational maxim: "obedience to the ever-lasting love of truth."[14] From this dictum, it is theoretically possible for mankind to conduct scientific research with an eye towards actually understanding, for the sake of knowledge, for the sake of knowing, and for the sake of human utility.

A project such as Bacon's is not contingent on one individual; rather, it is a task which requires much help. As a single man cannot undertake this project by himself, Bacon must garner support.

> Of myself I say nothing; but in behalf of the business which is in hand I entreat men to believe that it is not an opinion to be held, but a work to be done; and to be well assured that I am labouring to lay the foundation, not of any sect or doctrine, but of human utility and power.[15]

Bacon's role, as he saw it, was that of founder; he began the "work to be done." The work to which he refers is the increase of "human utility and power" for the betterment of man. In coming to understand nature through the purposeful pursuit of science, Bacon initiated a reform in intellection. As mentioned, the maxim of this project is truth: "it is in fact the true end and termination of infinite error."[16] Thus, man is able to fulfill a higher aspect of his nature, as both "a servant and interpreter of nature."[17] According to Bacon, the greatest error which impedes learning is the perceived end which, when righted, is "sincerely to give a true account of [man's] gift of reason, to the benefit and use of men."[18] In doing so, men can and should develop "a rich storehouse for the glory of the Creator and the relief of man's estate."[19]

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[11] Ibid. 9.

[12] Ibid. 10.

[13] Ibid. 16.

[14] Ibid. 14.

[15] Ibid. 16.

Undertaking an instauration or restoration of the sciences requires a complimentary political reform. Bacon notes that "[h]uman knowledge and human power come to the same thing."[20] Politics, as they hitherto had been practiced, must undergo a radical transformation. Likening himself to the Platonic Socrates, who, according to Cicero, brings philosophy down from the heavens and into the city, Bacon believed he was bringing both philosophy and science down from the air and onto a strong foundation.[21] For Bacon's scientific designs to be actualized, a regime must be founded that is in service to the ends of science.

The *New Atlantis*

The *New Atlantis* appears to be an example of the type of regime which Bacon desired to found: one in which the concerns of religion, the necessities of politics, and the consequences of science appear to coexist harmoniously. That being said, the *New Atlantis* does not admit of a clear and simple interpretation. Common to Baconian texts, general impediments appear as a result of his enigmatic style: Bacon employs the art of esoteric writing. Particular obstacles arise, however, that are unique to the *New Atlantis*: first, the *New Atlantis* is a fable; second, the *New Atlantis* is both posthumously published and apparently abortive; third, the *New Atlantis* is narrated; fourth, the final quarter of the text poses complications; fifth, interpretation of Bacon's own feigned commonwealth is problematic in light of his scathing assessment of the feigned commonwealths of others; and last, the relationship between the title and the text as a whole is not obvious. As a result of the aforementioned complications, the *New Atlantis* does not provide clear, easy solutions to the problems of modern science.

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[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid. 31.

[18] Bacon, *Advancement* I.v.10.

[19] Ibid. I.v.11.

[20] Francis Bacon, *The New Organon*, eds. Lisa Jardine and Michael Silverthorne (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000) I.iii. Unless otherwise indicated, all references to *The New Organon* are from this edition. However, where necessary, another edition has been cited.

[21] Bacon, *Great Instauration* 6.

Bacon's approach to writing complicates any analysis of his work. Although there are few instances when Bacon is explicit, he is overt in his own employment of rhetoric. Considering writing in general, Bacon states that traditionally "he that delivereth knowledge, desireth to deliver it in such a form as may be best believed, and not as may be best examined."[22] Persuasion, rather than scrutiny, is the reason that most men write. While Bacon's obvious concern is to influence his readers, he also writes to encourage his readers to consider his ideas carefully. As such, not only does Bacon employ the art of persuasion, but he utilizes esotericism as well. In discussing his own understanding, and presumably employment of narration, Bacon is explicit about his intention to reveal and his intention to obscure:

> there remaineth yet another use of poesy parabolic, opposite to that which we last mentioned: for that tendeth to demonstrate and illustrate that which is taught or delivered, and this other to retire and obscure it: that is, when the secrets and mysteries of religion, policy, or philosophy, are involved in fables.[23]

By his own admission, Bacon writes in such a way as to "retire and obscure" his subject matter. What exactly does this esoteric approach entail?[24] Bacon's writings, by design, are intended to both illuminate and obviate his intended purpose. As such, reading a Baconian text is not a straightforward process. Bacon does not write simply to entice his readers to agree with his arguments; Bacon writes to entice his readers to think. Reading a Baconian text, then, is an intellectual exercise, one which requires dedication and hard work; as Jerry Weinberger succinctly notes, "Bacon teaches as much by what he does not say as by what he does."[25] In this manner, Bacon is able to write books available to the general public, but intended for a self-selecting few: "The pretence whereof is, to remove the vulgar capacities from being admitted to the secrets of knowledges, and to reserve them to selected auditors, or wits of such sharpness as can pierce the veil."[26] Bacon intentionally has constructed his texts to be challenging: by employing the art of esoteric writing, Bacon seeks to ensure that only those with suitable wits and sharpness are able to glean his intended meaning from his works, while those who lack these necessary aptitudes are impeded from doing so.

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[22] Bacon, *Advancement* II.xvii.3.

[23] Ibid. II.iv.4.

[24] I owe much of my understanding of Bacon's employment of esotericism to Laurence Lampert and Jerry Weinberger. Lampert, *Nietzsche and Modern Times* 21-24; Jerry Weinberger, *Science, Faith, and Politics: Francis Bacon and the Utopian Roots of the Modern Age* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984); also see Howard B. White, *Peace Among the Willows: The Political Philosophy of Francis Bacon* (The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1968) 110-112; and Charles Whitney, "Francis Bacon's Instauratio: Dominion of and over Humanity," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 50:3 (1989): 371-390.

[25] Weinberger, *Science, Faith, and Politics* 35.

Given that the *New Atlantis* describes a heretofore unknown regime, one might expect a discussion of Bensalem's governmental organization. Unfortunately, there is no such discussion. Of all the subjects with which Bacon is concerned, one subject—the one conspicuous by its absence in the *New Atlantis*—is highlighted for the need to employ esoteric writing:

> Concerning Government, it is a part of knowledge secret and retired, in both these respects which are deemed secret; for some things are secret because they are hard to know, and some because they are not fit to utter. We see all governments are obscure and invisible.[27]

Politics and the art of government are subjects which Bacon sees fit to obscure. It is true that secrets of government are often "hard to know," but why are they "not fit to utter?" Bacon's silence on the government of Bensalem raises concerns regarding the nature of the island. Since the power structure on Bensalem is not elucidated, the reader is forced to "pierce the veil" that hides the true nature of the island.[28] By his silence, rather than tell his readers what to think about his fictitious island, Bacon leads his readers to see Bensalem for themselves.[29]

While Bacon's esotericism and his silence on the art of government are sufficient obstacles to a clear interpretation of the *New Atlantis*, the account is also a fable. Why has Bacon chosen a fable to present an account of the seemingly harmonious cohabitation of science, religion, and politics?[30] Bacon's use of allegory pays homage to the works of his intellectual predecessors who profoundly have influenced his understanding of writing and intellection:

> for I impute that not a few fables of the Ancient Poets have in them, from the beginning, some Mystery and Allegory; whether because I am captured with veneration of the Early

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[26] Bacon, *Advancement* II.xvii.5.

[27] Ibid. II.xxiii.47.

[28] Ibid. II.xvii.5.

[29] Bronwen Price notes that the "ambiguous and open-ended" nature of the text "ensures that the reader remains active and alert, being encouraged to examine the different positions from which knowledge is presented, rather than simply accepting them." Bronwen Price, ed., *Francis Bacon's New Atlantis: New Interdisciplinary Essays* (New York: Manchester University Press, 2002) 14.

[30] In answer to this question, Elliot Simon posits that Bacon's use of the "fable is a moral interpretation of nature that reveals an ideal similitude of divine order through its representation of perfection." Elliot Simon, "Bacon's New Atlantis: the Kingdom of God and Man," *Christianity and Literature* 38:1 (1988): 45; On Bacon's use of the fable as a rhetorical devise, I follow Lampert, *Nietzsche and Modern Times* 24-26.

> ages, or because in some of the Fables I find so clear and so apt a likeness and conjunction with the thing signified, now in the texture of the Fable itself, now in the propriety of the Names by which the persons or Actors of the Fables are signified, and present themselves like they are inscriptions, so that no one can consistently deny that this sense [i]s from the beginning precepted and thought, and shadowed by industry.[31]

Bacon's allegorical preference is rooted in his study of ancient fables, specifically Greek myths. The *New Atlantis* is not the only fable written by Bacon: his *On the Wisdom of the Ancients* is a compilation of ancient myths with uniquely Baconian interpretations, while his *Advertisement Touching a Holy War* is a dialogue pointing to the relationship between politics and religion. All three of these texts—the *New Atlantis*, *On the Wisdom of the Ancients*, and *An Advertisement Touching a Holy War*—besides being mythic, also are constructed rationally "from the beginning," with an eye towards "Mystery and Allegory." Inherent in their mystery, like their abstractness and fictionality, is an enticement: in the very nature of the allegorical form, fables induce readers to think.

Compelling the use of one's rational capacity, fables serve a pedagogic purpose. With this intentionality, then, as suggested by Bacon, one must not "deny that this sense [i]s…precepted and thought, and shadowed by industry."[32] Bacon admits that fables can be written with industry, and intention. Imbedded within Bacon's fables are matters worthy of serious consideration:

> Nor is it concealed from me how versatile a matter the Fable is, that it is drawn here and there, and that it can be led here and there; and how large is the commodity of wit and strength of discourse that so prettily attributes to it thoughts that were never in it.[33]

Fables, then, are a literary form categorized by their versatility. Based on Bacon's explanation, interpreting his fables is not a simple task. Bacon advises that one must search "here and there" in order to find sources and explanations. Searching, however, must be undertaken to bolster one's understanding of the text, rather than at the expense of the text. The obstacle is one's own ignorance.

In choosing this literary form—the fable—Bacon sets a daunting task for any aspiring interpreter. Coming to understand the *New Atlantis* is a process riddled with intriguing difficulties and frustrations. And yet, Bacon encourages his readers—those who prove courageous and worthy—to discover the most precious secrets of his knowledge which may be hidden within its pages: the "Parable is like the Ark in which what is most precious in Knowledge customarily reposes."[34] Within this ark, namely the *New Atlantis*, Bacon has sequestered "what is most precious in Knowledge."

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[31] Francis Bacon, *On the Wisdom of the Ancients*, trans. Heidi Studer (Unpublished) Preface 7.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid. Preface 6.

Given the dominant schooling of his time, Bacon can justifiably ascertain what would have been common-knowledge for his peers. Since then, education has been much altered. Biblical learning is prominently lacking from contemporary education. During Bacon's time, even the most rudimentary education involved a consideration of the Bible. Although modern secular education does not demand biblical learning, understanding Bacon's texts does:

> Let no man upon a weak conceit of sobriety or an ill-applied moderation think or maintain, that a man can search too far, or be too well studied in the book of God's word, or in the book of God's work, divinity or philosophy; but rather let men endeavor an endless progress or proficience in both.[35]

Since Bacon has advised his readers to look to the Bible, and the sailors and the Bensalemites claim to be Christian, the current analysis of the *New Atlantis* does just that: where possible, the biblical allusions in the *New Atlantis* are located, contextualized, and explained.[36]

Another complication is posed by two related issues: the *New Atlantis* has been posthumously published and apparently is abortive. Accounts of the old Atlantis are found in two Platonic dialogues, the *Timaeus* and the *Critias*. The latter, like the *New Atlantis*, is often considered abortive. However, whereas the *Critias* concludes prior to an expected castigation of the Atlantans by Zeus, the *New Atlantis* concludes following the completion of the intended speech delivered by the Father of Salomon's House; to be more precise, the Father has completed his account of those topics which he has promised to discuss. Following the conclusion of the text, a note indicates that "the rest was not perfected" (83).[37] When and by whom this parenthetical aside is added is not clear: Bacon may have concluded his text with this disclaimer;

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[34] Ibid. Dedication 1.

[35] Bacon, *Advancement* I.i.3.

[36] According to Paterson, Bacon's use of biblical texts is "consciously insincere" and "his scriptural sophistry could hardly have been inadvertent." Paterson, "Role of Christianity" 425; elsewhere, Paterson states "that Bacon often uses scripture in ways that call his sincerity into question." Paterson, "Baconian Science" 12.

[37] Francis Bacon, *New Atlantis, New Atlantis and the Great Instauration*, ed. Jerry Weinberger, rev. edition (Wheeling: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1989). All references to the *New Atlantis* will be cited parenthetically in the text of this thesis: the first reference in a paragraph will be parenthetically cited, and all subsequent citations from the same page of text will presume the original citation; however, in instances where it is necessary to cite different pages, the previous citation applies to all sequential references.

alternately, it may have been appended following Bacon's death.[38] Since the text was published after Bacon's death, there is no way to determine whether Bacon believed his book to be abortive, or whether this is the conclusion of someone else. In his dedicatory letter to Bishop Andrews preceding *An Advertisement Touching a Holy War*, a text which is also posthumous and abortive, Bacon openly declared his intention for that book not to be published while he was alive:

> But I account the use that a man should seek of the publishing of his own writing before his death, to be but an untimely anticipation of that which is proper to follow a man and not go along with him.[39]

Having voiced his intention that *An Advertisement Touching a Holy War* not be published during his lifetime, and considering that matters of government are "secret and retired,"[40] it is understandable that Bacon did not publish the *New Atlantis* while he was alive.

Sir William Rawley, Bacon's chaplain, appended a note to the reader at the beginning of the *New Atlantis*.[41] Rawley's note, although informative, must not be considered definitive. Like the aside at the end of the text—confirming its incompletion—Rawley's introductory note may not have been authorized by Bacon. According to Rawley, the *New Atlantis* remains incomplete: "foreseeing it would be a long work, [Bacon's] desire of collecting the Natural History diverted him, which he preferred many degrees before it" (36). If Rawley is correct, the *New Atlantis* is not a coherent whole, but rather a portion of an abandoned work; any attempt at interpretation is thus necessarily hindered. However, if Rawley is incorrect, the *New Atlantis* contains all of the necessary details to interpret the text; it is thus complete, coherent, and understandable. One fact points to the latter possibility: Bacon saw fit to translate the text, as is, from Latin into English.[42] Therefore, the present study presupposes that the *New Atlantis*, in its current form, contains all of the details that Bacon believed necessary to interpret the text.[43]

If deciphering Bacon's intentions with this fable do not pose a sufficiently daunting task, the *New Atlantis* is further complicated by its delivery. Bacon chooses to relay the story through a narrator who experiences the events first hand. Created by Bacon for this specific purpose, this narrator is presumably the ideal character to provide this account. Why is this *the* man whom Bacon has created to reveal Bensalem?

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[38] In consideration of the concluding parenthetical aside, Paterson suggests that "the statement 'the rest was not perfected,' which closes the book, seems to have been" provided by Rawley. Paterson, "Baconian Science" 88.

[39] Francis Bacon, *An Advertisement Touching a Holy War*, ed. Laurence Lampert (Prospect Heights: Waveland Press, Inc., 2000) Dedicatory Letter 15.

[40] Bacon, *Advancement* II.xxiii.47.

[41] On Rawley's note, I follow Weinberger, "Science and Rule" 865-66.

[42] White 15; and Faulkner 114.

[43] On the apparent incompleteness of the text, see Weinberger, "Science and Rule" 869-72, 875; and Paterson, "Baconian Science" 88-92.

Coming to understand a literary character is difficult in any situation. Narrators present a unique difficulty; the words of Bacon's narrator are the only words from which one is able to judge this island of Bensalem. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance to consider the character of the man imparting his experience. Evaluating a narrated account involves evaluating a narrator. Most people seem to possess a natural predilection for trusting a narrator. This tendency is based on the presumption that one who weaves a tale must, of course, be honest. However, this is not always the case. Bacon's narrator proves a difficult appraisal, further complicated by the lack of detail revealed about him as a character. He is, at first blush, an enigma. His age, name, marital status, familial relationships, education, likes and dislikes, hair color, eye color, height, weight, dietary habits, favorite book, favorite color, political bent, and such, remain matters for speculation, although not all are worthy of equal time. One's evaluation of the *New Atlantis* hinges on one's appraisal of Bensalem, which in turn is dependent on one's judgment of the narrator. Who is this man? Gaining an understanding of this man is available through three sources of information: first, what the text says—his narration; second, what he does in the text—his actions; and third, what he does not say in the text—his omissions. The first two sources of information are clearly accessed through the narrator. The third is contingent on the first two. As such, all the information, and thus the means for our assessment of the narrator, is filtered through the narrator himself. Drawing from the narrator's advice, the point of origin from which one begins to assess the nature of this man is the Delphic wisdom: *know thyself* (43). This imperative, made ever more clear by the lack of information provided about the narrator, comes to the fore. Reading the *New Atlantis* involves reflexivity; one must remember to ask continually, what would I do? What would I ask?

Until one reaches the final speech of the text—namely that of the Father of Salomon's House—one is unaware of the technological prowess of the island. Following the Father's revelations, one is forced to undertake a radical reconsideration of everything that previously has been said. Although one might argue that it is best to undertake a study of the *New Atlantis* in light of the island's technology, this analysis does not presuppose the unique condition of Bensalem. As such, throughout the following commentary, Bensalem is considered as it is revealed. Maintaining the chronological integrity of the narrator's account ensures that one learns about Bensalem in the same manner as the sailors have experienced the island and in the order in which the narrator has chosen to reveal the island.

The *New Atlantis* is evidently an account of an imaginary commonwealth. Bacon, however, has little time for the musing of philosophers: "As for the philosophers, they make imaginary laws for imaginary commonwealths; and their discourses are the state, which give little light because they are so high."[44] In light of Bacon's criticism of his philosophic predecessors, how is one to interpret his account of a feigned commonwealth? First, one must consider whether or not the Bensalemite regime is an example of an ideal society.

Utopia is most simply and commonly defined as an example of "man's dreams for a better world."[45] Is the *New Atlantis* Bacon's dream for a better world? According to Timothy Paterson, Bacon argued that his new "science will be an unqualified and unproblematic good for all mankind."[46] Scholarly literature seems to agree that the *New Atlantis* represents Bacon's hope for the future. Howard B. White posits that the *New Atlantis* is "Bacon's own answer to the ancient quest for the best political order."[47] If White is correct, Bensalem is "the best political order" in which science is encouraged to flourish. That is not to say, however, one should assume Bensalem's regime is "perfect;" it does not necessarily follow that the best political order is a perfect political order. According to J.C. Davis, the ambiguities in the Bensalemite regime preclude the *New Atlantis* from being defined as a utopia in the traditional sense: Bacon's inability to commit to a regime, or write a utopia in the traditional sense, resulted from his "pessimistic view of the nature and mind of man."[48] Alternately, Nell Eurich argues that "Bacon's utopia [is] a complete testimony of his belief that through scientific knowledge man may progress to the utopian world."[49] Scholarly literature is further divided on a second issue: is the Bensalemite regime an imaginary commonwealth—insofar as it is a dream—or, is it a regime which Bacon intended to enact?

Answering this question points to the fundamental distinction between utopias and ideal regimes: a utopia is a philosophic project, a feigned commonwealth in the strict sense, whereas an ideal society retains the possibility of being instituted:

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[44] Bacon, *Advancement* II.xxiii.48.

[45] J.C. Davis, *Utopia and the Ideal Society: A Study of English Utopian Writing 1516- 1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989) 12; also see Nell Eurich, *Science in Utopia: A Mighty Design* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967) 5.

[46] Paterson, "Secular Control" 457.

[47] White 102.

[48] Davis 134.

[49] Eurich 140.

> Strictly speaking, *New Atlantis* is no more a utopia, in the sense of a perfected pattern of life, than a divination from heaven. Bensalem is a realizable project to be achieved widely or universally, not a perfect pattern realizable rarely or no place.[50]

Robert Faulkner further states, "The *New Atlantis* is a model to be implemented."[51] Other scholars are less willing, than is Faulkner, to commit to Bacon's intention to enact this regime. Laurence Lampert suggests that while "Lord Bacon is a realist: Bacon is no utopian. He is the progenitor of a utopian dream, the founder of the modern faith in the technological conquest of nature," yet he remains silent on the issue of implementation.[52] Bronwen Price is less reticent with her skepticism, suggesting that simply because the account of Bensalem is disclosed, "does not necessarily mean that [it] should be imitated or followed."[53] Given this controversy, the initial distinction between utopias and ideal societies has been augmented by an additional question: did Bacon intend the regime of the *New Atlantis* to be enacted?

Davis suggests that since "Bacon left so many questions unanswered [it] obviously makes it difficult to characterize the work."[54] In order even to begin a consideration of questions such as these, one must first study the text. However, keeping in mind the aforementioned possibilities—whether or not the *New Atlantis* is a utopia, ideal society, or something else, and whether or not Bacon intended this regime to be implemented, avoided at all costs, or selectively enacted—helps provide a structure from which one can begin to consider fundamental aspects of the text.

Last, if one is hoping that the title might shed light on the text, one is likely to be sorely disappointed. The old Atlantis, as has been mentioned, is described in two primary Platonic dialogues, the *Timaeus* and the *Critias*. Both of these dialogues consider Atlantis and its relationships with ancient Athens. Thus, based on predispositions towards Atlantis, one may assume that the *New Atlantis* recounts the Platonic Atlantis. However, the word "Atlantis" occurs only five times in the text. The first occurrence is in the title. This is the name given to the work as a whole. Immediately, one recalls the mythic Atlantis. As such, a mythic quality is imbued in the text from the outset. On one level, we may be compelled to consider a return to the virtues of antiquity and a resurrection of the glory of the past: a return to the Atlantis of old. The other four references to Atlantis occur in the governor-priest's brief history of the world, in which he recounts the great war between Bensalem and the old Atlantis, a war which is parallel to the war between old Athens and old Atlantis, as described in the *Critias* and *Timaeus*. Hence, the *New Atlantis* is an unlikely title for a book about Bacon's fictional Bensalem. As such, one is left with a puzzle: what is the relationship between Bensalem and a new Atlantis?

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[50] Faulkner 118; also see White, whom Faulkner follows, 1-13, 97.

[51] Faulkner 114.

[52] Lampert, *Nietzsche and Modern Times* 20.

[53] Price 14.

[54] Davis 118.

Given the scope of the current analysis, this thesis attempts to elucidate some aspects of the text and thus shed light on Bacon's intentions with regard to the *New Atlantis*. As has been mentioned, this analysis takes the form of a close reading. For the most part, then, it is a line-by-line consideration of the text, during which, for the most part, the chronological integrity of the text has been maintained. In addition, since this text must stand on its own, citations to Bacon's other works, although used where necessary, have been kept to a minimum. Since Bacon encourages his readers to use their own faculties to interpret his works, secondary sources have also been kept to a minimum; as a result, the majority of references to scholarly literature occur in the footnotes.

This thesis is divided into seven chapters: the first considers the sailors' experiences prior to arriving on the island; the second discusses the initial interaction between the sailors and Bensalemites, prior to landing; the third considers the sailors' initial impressions of the Strangers' House and includes the narrator's speech; the fourth considers the governor-priest's conversations—the conditions of the sailors' stay, the miraculous conversion of the island, the nautical history, and Solamona's reforms; the fifth considers the Feast of the Family; the sixth considers Joabin's speech on theology and domestic policy; and the seventh chapter considers the revelations of the Father of Salomon's House. Each chapter is accompanied by concluding considerations which highlight the most fundamental aspects of each section. In the conclusion, which considers the *New Atlantis* in its totality, two fundamental questions are addressed: how are we to understand Bensalem? And, what is the 'new Atlantis'?

If the *New Atlantis* has indeed been completed to Bacon's satisfaction, then it contains all of the details that Bacon intended to include. Within the *New Atlantis* there is the best interpretational help available: Francis Bacon. As such, it is best simply to delve into the text. Accepting Bacon's invitation to embark on this adventure with his European narrator and this enigmatic crew, we begin our voyage into the unknown.

CHAPTER ONE: AT SEA

The *New Atlantis* abruptly opens with the conclusion of the sailors' stay in Peru and the inauguration of their journey to China and Japan. Focusing on their departure, one notes immediately that nothing is revealed of the sailors' year-long stay in Peru—the reasons they have been there, the reasons they are leaving, or the reasons they are resuming their voyage. Instead, it is the departure itself which marks the beginning of the text. Joining this journey, now in mid-voyage, "[w]e sailed from Peru…" (37).[1]

We Sail from Peru

It is evident that the sailors have not been home in a considerable amount of time; wherever home may be, at this point is unclear. They have spent a year in Peru, and for undisclosed reasons are now en route to China and Japan, an expedition which they believe may take a year. Given their extended stay in Peru and their destination in Asia, the sailors do not intend to return home any time soon. Although it is impossible to determine the exact amount of time these sailors have been abroad, it clearly has been significant.

While Bacon's narrator remains silent on details of the voyage, a number of generalizations can be made regarding the typical character of mariners and these sailors in particular. Removed from their native country, habits, and traditions, these sailors are likely more open to the habits and traditions of other cultures. From their previous travels, they have likely experienced new and foreign ideas and, at least to some degree, become more adaptable to different peoples and settings. Displaced from that which is familiar, and from the watchful eye of one's family and one's state, one indeed may exhibit characteristics that might be deemed unacceptable to general society at home. For example, in the company of only men, sailors may indulge certain behaviors—drunkenness and vulgarity while aboard their ship, and debauchery while in foreign ports—which are unacceptable in the company of respectable women.

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[1] In choosing to begin the text in this manner—namely, with the conclusion of the sailors' adventures in Peru and the start of a new adventure destined for Asia—Bacon points to the nature of all beginnings. These sailors do not set sail from their homeland directly for the East. Instead, their current journey commences after an extended absence from home. The Renaissance, the Protestant Revolution, and the Scientific Revolution (to name a number of notable historical periods) do not begin on their own. Rather, they follow in the path established by previous historic periods. The sailing depicted in the *New Atlantis* is no exception: Bacon's mariners are involved in a journey, the beginning of which is antecedent to their arrival in Peru and follows their departure from home.

With a strong desire for adventure and aware of their continued absence from home, the mariners sail west. For the first five months, or thereabouts, the easterly winds are accommodating, pushing the ship along the sailors' intended westward course. Unfortunately, the winds take a turn, "settl[ing] in the west for many days" (37).[2] Unable to move forwards, the sailors contemplate returning to Peruvian shores. By revealing the sailors' deliberations regarding a return to Peru, Bacon emphasizes a tendency in men: faced by insurmountable obstacles, it is natural to consider returning to the comforts that a previous port, or location, might provide. When the unknown proves difficult to attain, it seems rational to desire a return to that which is familiar. Finding themselves in such a predicament, Bacon's sailors do not retreat. There are two plausible explanations for their decision to continue on their intended course: first, they believe that they are more likely to arrive safely in the East;[3] and second, given its vague mention, their departure from Peru may not have been prompted by favorable circumstances. If departing from Peru is considered a positive change, whether motivated by a need to leave or a desire for adventure, then China and Japan, unlike Peru, hold hope for a new beginning, one no longer attainable in the country from which they have departed.[4]

At this point, the point at which the sailors may be accepting defeat at the hands of unfavorable winds, the winds turn yet again. From westerly winds, "strong and great winds" develop from the south; the sailors are carried north-east (37).[5] Contrary to the sailors' decision to continue towards China and Japan, the winds are pushing them towards the east, back towards Peru, and north towards America. In the same way that the sailors are unable to control the lack of favorable wind, they also are unable to control the overabundant wind. Like all mariners, the sailors are dependent almost entirely on the favorability of the winds. Although the sailors finally are moving, albeit in the wrong direction, they now face a more serious problem: they have exhausted their supplies. If these sailors have adequately prepared for the voyage, the amount of reserves should exceed the amount of time they have calculated for the crossing. Considering nautical contingencies, "victuals for twelve months" suggests that the sailing is estimated to take less than a year. If they have indeed been rationing and have "made good spare" of the provisions, these sailors have been afloat for at least one year if not more, since leaving Peru.

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[2] In discussing the amount of time the winds are favorable, Bacon's narrator refers to the duration in terms of months; however, while referring to the unaccommodating winds, he uses days to account for the time. By distinguishing between months and days in this manner, Bacon alludes to an aspect of human nature: when things are going well, we are less apt to dwell on the duration of favorable times; however, when things are going poorly, we count the minutes until unfavorable times end. From this distinction, one can infer that people often fixate on difficult times and take good times for granted.

[3] Given that the sailors have brought supplies sufficient for a year-long sailing, they may believe that they are closer to China and Japan than to Peru.

[4] On the use of the sea as allegory, see White 93-102.

[5] When discussing the departure of the sailors from Peru and their voyage to the East, Bacon's narrator makes mention of all four cardinal points. In doing so, Bacon emphasizes the confusion involved in the voyage. While the mariners have an intended destination, they have been sailing every which way possible and in all directions, rather than on their proscribed course. Similar to the Israelites, who spend forty years wandering through the desert in order to become prepared to enter the Holy Land, Bacon's sailors may require a preparatory period to enter Bensalem. Although I disagree with Simon's suggestion that the sailors have experienced "a violent storm," I concur in principle: "their 'westward progress' (the movement towards new discovery) [is impeded] by pushing them back eastward (into the confusion of the past), and then into the contraries of the north and south. This tempestuous 'voyage of discovery' symbolizes breaking physical and intellectual barriers in search of true knowledge, of 'sailing into uncharted oceans' of unsystematized experience, of being lost in confusion and error and of losing one's intellectual self-control with all the accompanying frustrations and dangers." Simon 46.

Lost Men

Once Bacon's narrator establishes the sailors' physical condition, he provides the reader with insight into their psychological disposition. Since these mariners have been at sea for over a year, with no mention of having landed anywhere, and also have exhausted their supplies, there is a marked shift between the sailors' initial intentions and the possibilities now available to them; lacking supplies to return to Peru, and thus retreating no longer an option, and lacking supplies to continue to China and Japan, and thus completing their journey no longer a possibility, there seems little hope. As the narrator notes, "finding [them]selves in the midst of the greatest wilderness of waters in the world, without victuals [they] gave [them]selves for lost men, and prepared for death" (37). Lost in a "wilderness of waters," they are stranded in an inhospitable environment, lacking food, potable water, and a means of escape. They are, indeed, lost men. In the face of imminent death, the sailors prepare themselves.

The precise manner of the sailors' preparation for death is not clear. Explicitly, the narrator notes that they appeal to God for intervention:

> Yet we did lift up our hearts and voices to God above, who *showeth his wonders in the deep*; beseeching him of his mercy, that as in the beginning he discovered the face of the deep, and brought forth dry land, so he would now discover land to us that we might not perish. (37)

Based on the narrator's account, there are two clear biblical appeals: first, for God to "*showeth his wonders in the deep*," as is revealed in Psalm 107; and second, for God to "discove[r] the face of the deep, and br[ing] forth dry land," as is revealed in Genesis. Both of these biblical references are found in the Old Testament; the God who has shown His wonders in the deep and who has brought forth dry land is the same God to whom the sailors are appealing.

Following the narrator's assertion regarding the sailors' preparedness for death, he appends "yet" to his statement of the sailors' appeal to God: "Yet [they] did lift up [their] hearts and voices to God above" (37). This "yet" has far-reaching ramifications in understanding not only the sailors, but also their relationship to God. Two issues come to the fore as a result of the narrator's "yet:" first, the sailors' actual acceptance of death; and second, the sailors' piety. Preparedness for death suggests that these sailors have confessed their sins and have sought absolution. However, they are not willing to forego the possibility of divine intervention. Since they have prayed for a miracle, one prematurely might conclude that these sailors believe that God has the power to redeem them. By investigating the sailors' two biblical allusions—Psalm 107 and Genesis—one may gain insight into their preparedness for death and thus their religiosity.

i. Psalm 107

Psalm 107 begins by recounting the mercy and goodness of God: "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever."[6] The Psalm paints a picture, in verse, of the indiscretions and salvation of the Jewish people. Psalm 107 is at once diagnostic and prescriptive: it diagnoses the plight of the Jews and then prescribes prayer as the means to their salvation.[7] Like the narrator of the *New Atlantis*, the author of Psalm 107 remains anonymous. Despite the anonymity of the composer, the voice of the Psalm is of one who has found salvation through God. Written by one man who has been redeemed, and thus freed "from the hand of the enemy" by divine intervention, this Psalm describes the experiences of others who have likewise been liberated.[8] Similarly, the *New Atlantis* is narrated by one man among the sailors, who has partaken of this adventure and describes his experiences and those of his fellow mariners.

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[6] *King James: Quick Reference Bible* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2000) Psalm 107:1. Unless otherwise indicated, all biblical references are to this version of the *King James*.

[7] Weinberger suggests that Bacon's use of the Psalm "reverses the Psalmist's story. Though strong winds afflict the sailors, it is these same strong winds, not calm, that bring them to a haven that is at first not desired. While the men in the Psalm do nothing to help themselves....Bacon's sailors do all in their power to save themselves, turning to prayer as a last resort." Weinberger, "Science and Rule" 873.

[8] Psalm 107:2. As mentioned earlier (see footnote 5 of this chapter), at the beginning of the *New Atlantis*, Bacon makes mention of all four cardinal points; likewise, Psalm 107 also references all of the cardinal points: God "gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south." Ibid. 107:3.

As depicted in the Psalm, there are four types of people to whom God has proffered help: first, those travelers who are attempting to return home;[9] second, those people who have been imprisoned;[10] third, those who have transgressed and are ill;[11] and fourth, those who are at sea.[12] From the outset, the situation of the sailors in the *New Atlantis* clearly is parallel to the Israelites who are at sea. However, while the first three categories of men do not correspond explicitly to the situation of Bacon's sailors, on more careful consideration, they too apply to these mariners.

As noted in the Psalm, the first three types of saved individuals initially do not appear to be analogous to the sailors of the *New Atlantis*. Considering the first type of men in the Psalm—those who are returning home—there are two kinds of homecomings: those which involve an arrival at a place previously departed, and those which involve an arrival at a new location. Moreover, a homecoming may be either literal—a physical return—or metaphoric—a psychic return. Although we do not know from where the sailors have originated, and thus do not know where their home is, we are prompted to pause and speculate on the general circumstances of the sailors. While it is possible that Bacon's sailors do not have a home, at least one to which they may return, they evidently are stranded in inhospitable waters. Given their current predicament, the sailors, as previously discussed, are incapable of returning to their point of origin, or arriving at their intended destination.[13] With this in mind, then, the sailors, like the Israelites in the Psalm, have been "wander[ing] in the wilderness in a solitary way; they have found no city to dwell in."[14] Despite having sojourned in Peru for a year, the sailors have chosen not to dwell in a Peruvian city.[15] Wandering at sea, as the Israelites have wandered through the desert, the sailors are "[h]ungry and thirsty, [while] their souls fain[t] in them."[16] Comparing the description of the

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[9] Ibid. 107:4-9.

[10] Ibid. 107:10-16.

[11] Ibid. 107:17-22.

[12] Ibid. 107:23-32.

[13] This may warrant comparison with the plight of Aeneas and his sailors. Their city, Troy, has been destroyed in a battle compelled by Gods and waged by men. Aeneas, in an attempt to fulfill his own destiny, embarks on a journey to found a new Troy.

[14] Psalm 107:4.

[15] This is pertinent insofar as the sailors readily choose to stay in Bensalem, despite the short duration of their visit and their limited exposure to the island (60).

[16] Psalm 107:5.

Israelites to that of the sailors, the reader is encouraged to identify the similarities: both have no city in which to dwell, and both are hungry and thirsty, physically and psychically.

As regards the second type of men, the comparison between Bacon's sailors and those who are imprisoned is not evident as readily as is the relationship between the sailors and the wandering Jews. In the Psalm, those who are physically imprisoned—"bound in affliction and iron"—also "sit in darkness and in the shadow of death."[17] Presumably, the Israelites have been imprisoned as punishment for past crimes. What is the history of the sailors in the *New Atlantis*? Have the sailors previously transgressed? If so, have their prior actions affected their departure from Peru? Or, are there external forces, other than the winds, that are influencing their current predicament? At this juncture of the text, such questions do not admit answers. It is clear, however, that these sailors are bound at sea; they are unable to return to Peru and unable to travel to China. Like all mariners unable to find land, these sailors must remain on their ship. The sailors, like the imprisoned Israelites, are shrouded in darkness and are awaiting their impending deaths.

In the Psalm, the third type of redeemed men are those who have transgressed and are ill. It is of note that it is only when they "draw near unto the gates of death" that the Israelites call for divine intervention.[18] In like manner, it is only once the sailors have prepared for death that they solicit otherworldly aid. Since Bacon draws a parallel between his mariners and the Israelites of the Psalm, one might wonder, at this point, if the sailors are also ill.[19]

As explained above, it is the appeals of the seafaring, the fourth type of men, which most obviously pertain to the situation of Bacon's sailors: "[t]hey that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters."[20] Like these mariners, the sailors of the Psalm "see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep."[21] The biblical God has the power to control the oceans and the winds. Seafaring men, who find themselves at the mercy of inhospitable seas, beseech God. Presumably, then, the perceived cause of unfavorable winds, and thus the apparent venue for assistance, is God or nature. Man, based on the experiences of these sailors, does not have the power to cause or control wind; consequently, salvation must be found in God, not in man. While the Jews, as portrayed in the Psalm, request a calming or raising of the winds, Bacon's mariners, rather than solicit the means of accomplishing their task, seek its end—that of God's intervention and guidance to shore. In exhorting divine assistance, the sailors aboard Bacon's ship, like the Israelites in the Psalm, ask to be brought to "their desired haven."[22]

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[17] Ibid. 107:10.

[18] Ibid. 107:18.

[19] Later in the *New Atlantis*, Bacon's narrator reveals that one third of the crew is ill. It is only once the sickness afflicting the crew is discussed, that the pertinence of the Psalm is elucidated (39, 42).

[20] Psalm 107:23.

[21] Ibid. 107:24.

For the reasons outlined in the Psalm—saving those who do not have cities, saving those who are imprisoned, saving the ill who have transgressed, and saving the seafaring—God must be exalted. Regardless of the causes of these harms, whether they are a result of human fallibility, external human factors, or God, all of God's actions—both beneficent and malevolent—must be celebrated. The Psalm concludes with advice to the wise: "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord."[23] Having presented this biblical allusion, Bacon's narrator seems to suggest that any sailor, regardless of his past transgressions, as confirmed by the Israelites of the Psalm, is worthy of salvation.

ii. In the Beginning

In the second biblical reference, the sailors explicitly request divine "mercy" (37). Their appeal is specific: they ask God, "that as in the beginning he discovered the face of the deep, and brought forth dry land, so he would discover land to [them], that [they] might not perish." Indeed, Bacon compels his readers to return to the beginning of the Bible, and to the origins of nature and man. Drawing out this implicit parallel, then, the lost sailors of the *New Atlantis* are stranded in a formless, darkened ocean. Realistically, the sailors face an unavoidable demise. Only a miracle can save them from this inevitable end. It is the Old Testament God who performs the first, and most mysterious miracle: the act of creation ex-nihilo.[24] According to Genesis, "[i]n the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."[25] Now, adrift at sea, these sailors require another miracle: these sailors call for land to be revealed.

If divine clemency is proffered, God will disclose the location of land. In this case, however, God is not creating the earth; He is revealing His previous creation to the sailors. It is on the third day of creation that God separates the heaven from the sea. If the sailors are directed to land, they too shall live to see another day. Contrary to the miracle of creation, these sailors are not asking to be created; they are asking to be recreated. They will no longer be lost men, but rather will be reborn through divine revelation. As such, by beseeching God's mercy, these sailors are requesting a new beginning, one prior to the fall of man, from which a new order and a new foundation will be imposed.

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[22] Ibid. 107:30.

[23] Ibid. 107:43.

[24] In *The Advancement of Learning*, Bacon expounds upon his understanding of creation: "in the work of creation we see a double emanation of Virtue from God: the one referring more properly to the Power, the other to Wisdom; the one expressed in making the subsistence of the matter, and the other in disposing the beauty of the form." Bacon, *Advancement* I.vi.2.

[25] Genesis 1:1-2.

Hope for Salvation

The following day, having prepared for death and requested Godly assistance, the sailors see "thick clouds" (37). Biblically, while the Jews are wandering the desert, the God of the Old Testament often appears in the form of clouds.[26] Scientifically, nautical experience holds that clouds at sea signify land. Perhaps extrapolating from both biblical knowledge and nautical experience, these sailors believe that the clouds on the horizon indicate land. Potential salvation does not arrive with dawn at the start of a new day. It is in the evening, once an entire day has been spent, that the sailors see the clouds. With clouds looming on the horizon, these "lost men" who have allegedly prepared for death, suddenly are hopeful. A situation that has appeared bleak, from which no man on the voyage believed he would return, may not mark the end of their lives. Against their wills, these sailors have been carried along by the south-westerly winds. Now, having regained control of their ship, they choose to sail towards the clouds. Being "utterly unknown," the South Sea may contain "islands or continents, that hitherto were not come to light." Anticipating land and thus salvation, shrouded in darkness and shadow, they sail throughout the night towards the clouds.

Considerations on the Departure from Peru and its Unexpected Consequences

In *On the Wisdom of the Ancients*, Bacon makes mention of the importance of beginnings: "Increases belong in great part to their Beginnings."[27] In light of Bacon's suggestion, it is essential to consider the opening of the *New Atlantis*. From the outset, the beginning of the *New Atlantis*, to use the words of the Platonic Socrates, is "a strange image."[28] Contextually, the text begins aboard a ship at sea, chronicling the adventures of a group of sailors. Bacon's sailors have experienced the dangers of seafaring to the fullest: they are unable to advance; they are unable to retreat; and they have no supplies. Despite the concision with which the *New Atlantis* starts, the opening six sentences introduce the three primary concerns that permeate Bacon's text—technology, politics, and God—and the relationships therein.

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[26] For examples, see Exodus 13:21, 14:19, 16:10, 19:9; and Numbers 9:16, 11:25.

[27] Bacon, *Wisdom* "Dedication to Cambridge" 3.

[28] Plato, *The Republic of Plato*, trans. Allan Bloom, 2nd ed. (New York: Basic Books, 1991) 515a.

It is only through the use of his industry that man is able to float upon the water and thus sail across the ocean. By undertaking a mission at sea, these sailors have put their trust in science and are exercising their mastery of nature. Technology affords humans the tools to overcome their physical impediments; with the aid of scientific helps, men are no longer restrained by the limits imposed by human physiology.

The ship is not only an example of human ingenuity, but is also a political metaphor. One need only consider the Platonic ship of state, the philosophic archetype of this metaphor, introduced in the *Republic*, to realize that the ship represents a closed political system, albeit one lacking women and children, in which the sailors are dependent almost entirely on each other. At once, human abilities and human deficiencies in mastering nature are introduced. Like the prisoners shackled within the Platonic cave, these sailors are confined aboard their ship.[29] Plato's allegory of the cave is closely connected to his metaphor of the ship of state. When considered in light of Bacon's ship and his sailors, a microcosmic understanding of both Plato's images and the situation of these sailors is revealed. Aboard the ship, the sailors have formed a sub-culture. The ship is a polity, albeit a moving polity, unto itself. Thus, it is not necessarily shackled by the laws of the country from which it originally has embarked. Understood in this way, then, despite being fettered aboard the ship, these sailors are in political transition—between their country of origin and Peru, and between Peru and their destination—one made possible only through man's mastery over nature.[30]

Having sojourned in Peru for a year and having spent a year sailing to the East, these sailors appear neither to fear the unknown nor to lack trust in their own abilities. That being said, the sailors' appeal to God is motivated by an inability to control their course; their technology and their politics have proven insufficient. Only a miracle can save them. Recalling the biblical myth of creation, the sailors thereby beseech the one power capable of creating miracles: God. If there is a God, one who is willing to intervene on behalf of men, then the possibility of miracles exists. As a result, there is potential salvation from an apparently inescapable end. Simultaneously, however, by referring to Psalm 107, the sailors should also recall the punitive aspect of God; God punishes in order to reform and educate.

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[29] Ibid. 514a.

[30] See footnote 5 of this chapter.

Underpinning Bacon's three primary concerns is the perpetual human predicament: mortality. A question of the sailors' health has been posed already in this chapter: are any of the sailors ill? Sickness is a constant reminder of human mortality. Of immediate concern for these sailors is not the threat of illness, but the perceived inevitability of their own deaths. Bacon discusses this issue in both his *Essays* and *The Advancement of Learning*. Although fearing death is irrational, it is understandable: "Men fear death, as children fear to go in the dark; and as that natural fear in children is increased with tales so is the other."[31] Drawing out Bacon's analogy, one can presume that if fear of the dark is natural in children, likewise, fear of death is natural in men. The trappings of death terrify more than death itself—"Pompa mortis magis terret quam mors ipsa."[32] Bacon suggests that death—the unknown—is not the actual cause of the fear; rather, it is the tales of the unknown that cause such fear. In spite of their attempts to ameliorate the human fear of death, poets and philosophers enable its perpetuation: "So they have increased the fear of death in offering to cure it."[33] If the focus on life and living is "a discipline and preparation to die, they must needs make men think that it is a terrible enemy, against whom there is no end of preparing."[34] Despite its naturalness, since it is a sign of weakness, the fear of death must be conquered. Such awareness is demonstrated in the *New Atlantis* by the sailors who, motivated by these preparatory stories—albeit stories not mentioned by Bacon's narrator—attempt to circumvent death; they appeal to science, which holds hope for human beings through ingenuity to conquer death, and they appeal to God, who can miraculously save men from their inevitable fate.

While man necessarily dies, man also has the ability to hope and strive.[35] Bacon's sailors, exercising their free-will in the face of adversity, decide to continue on their path to China and Japan, and choose to sail towards the clouds. Man's ability to hope is evinced by both these actions: by continuing on their course, the sailors are willing to sacrifice their safety for their adventure; and by sailing towards the clouds, the sailors are attempting to save their own lives. Although Bacon's narrator admits the sailors' preparedness to die, these men continue to hope:

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[31] Bacon, *Essays*, ed. Michael J. Hawkins (Vermont: Everyman, 1999) "Of Death" 5.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Bacon, *Advancement* II.xxi.5.

[34] Ibid.

[35] For a consideration of hope in relation to Bacon, see White 17-28; also see Innes 7.

first, they pray for a divine miracle; and then, they follow the natural signs which may, or may not, indicate land. While the inevitability of death is always certain, faced with its imminent arrival, the sailors make an effort to ensure their survival. As such, Bacon seems to point to the power of free-will and the importance of hope.

It is in the face of death, when neither technology nor politics can provide salvation, that men entreat a divine miracle. From the outset of the *New Atlantis*, the biblical story of creation must be reconsidered. That Genesis is evoked at the beginning of the text, points to the gravity of the situation at hand. Bacon's sailors are requesting a new beginning for themselves, one which promises far-reaching ramifications for their intended voyage to China and Japan, a journey which now seems highly unlikely. Only once Bacon has encouraged his reader to "scrutinize the image"[36] of the sailors adrift at sea and the importance of these concerns—technology, politics, and God—are the sailors miraculously saved. The question remains as to whether this inexplicable discovery of land is an act of technology, politics, God, or luck.

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[36] Plato, *Republic* 489a.

CHAPTER TWO: THE ISLAND

Having spent the night anticipating death, on the following dawn, the sailors find their prayers are answered and their hopes fulfilled: they see land. An hour and half after the sighting, they "ente[r] into a good haven" (38).[1] Similar to the redeemed Jews in the 107th Psalm, they have been brought "unto their desired haven."[2] Unlike the Israelites who sought the Promised Land, these mariners do not seek a particular land for refuge; rather, any land will do. Within sight is a "port of a fair city; not great indeed, but well built, and that gave a pleasant view from the sea" (38). Since these sailors have been at sea for at least a year, and have been through a terrifying ordeal, one might expect any city and the land on which it stands to appear inviting.

Given the "utterly unknown" (37) nature of the South Sea and the people who dwell within its unexplored lands, this haven may prove less than accommodating. While the sailors are well-aware of the probable dangers at sea, they remain ignorant of the potential dangers of this island. That being said, if the sailors choose to remain aboard their ship and attempt to survive against insurmountable odds, they are likely to die. On this island, however, there is the potential for salvation. Each additional minute upon the ship, the location of their prolonged captivity and misfortune, is long. Presumably comforted by the prospect of land beneath their feet, the sailors "c[o]me close to shore and offe[r] to land" (38).[3]

Despite the sailors' hopes, the islanders refuse their request. Immediately, the islanders, brandishing "bastons in their hands," appear on shore (38). When the ship first enters the harbor, the narrator comments on the port and the city, but makes no mention of the people. Although there is no verbal interaction, no "cries or fierceness," the sailors are able to interpret the islanders' behavior; while these inhabitants of the South Sea are foreign to the sailors and the sailors foreign to the locals, given that the islanders are able to interpret the sailors' intention to land, and likewise the sailors are able to interpret the islanders' refusal, these two peoples are not so dissimilar that they are incomprehensible to each other. The islanders' message is clear: the sailors are forbidden from landing and are not welcome on the island.

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[1] Simon argues that the narrator's assessment of the port "implies a discovery of both transcendent right order in nature and an ideal society resulting from a more perfect application of the intellect." Simon 46.

[2] Psalm 107:30.

[3] How and in what manner the offer of landing is made, is not discussed by Bacon's narrator. Based on the narrator's account, the ship approaches the shore, and the sailors "offered to land."

For the reader, having become sympathetic to the plight of these seafaring men, the response of the islanders may seem inhospitable, and perhaps unjust.[4] However, if the reader turns his sympathies towards these unknown islanders, a slightly different picture emerges. In an uncharted territory, the arrival of uninvited strangers is bound to raise questions and concerns. The sailors, hitherto unknown in the South Sea, are strangers to the islanders, and the islanders are unknown to the sailors. With these circumstances in mind, political caution suggests that an immediate offer of respite is not the most logical course of action. For these islanders, political prudence supercedes conventions of hospitality: authorization to land is contingent on the behavior of these foreign seamen.[5]

That being said, one cannot help but empathize with Bacon's sailors. While the reader may understand that the sailors are "not a little discomforted" (38), one might also find oneself not a little frustrated. Since the anticipated sanctuary has been denied, the sailors confer amongst themselves as to their course of action. It is here that Bacon provides the first insight into the political organization of the ship. The sailors, faced with uncertainty accompanied by uneasiness, deliberate amongst themselves. Although an undisclosed form of deliberation occurs, it is unclear whether the entire crew participates or only a few of the foremost men. Regardless, it is clear that the sailors' options are limited: they lack supplies; they have no alternative destination; and it is doubtful that they are capable of using force. In light of their circumstances, the sailors face a difficult choice: the sailors must either hope for an alteration in the islanders' behavior and accept any benevolence offered them, or face uncertainty at sea.[6]

In the midst of their deliberations, the sailors are interrupted by an approaching boat of locals. Although no previous mention has been made by Bacon's narrator of vessels being harbored in port, it is now clear that the islanders have a number of small boats, one of which is approaching the ship. While the sailors have not received a welcome, the islanders' actions do not seem to be born of fear, and the small boat approaching the ship does not appear to serve a military purpose, but rather a communicative one. Eight islanders are in this "small boat" (38);[7] although the precise number of islanders who board the sailors' ship is ambiguous, the boarding party likely is comprised of two islanders.

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[4] On this point, I follow Price 9.

[5] The island practice of prohibiting uninvited incursions stands in stark contrast to the Greek tradition of the guest-friends. Based on ancient Greek practice and often biblical precedent as well, a host is required to admit a stranger, regardless of personal harm. An example of the proper treatment of strangers, particularly those who have arrived by sea, is evident in Homer's *Odyssey*. When Odysseus arrives secretly at the land of the Phaiakians, he identifies himself as a stranger: "for I am an unhappy stranger, and I have come here a long way from a distant land, and I know nobody" (VII.24-25). The eldest of the Phaiakians chastises his fellows for their poor treatment of Odysseus: strangers should be allowed to bathe; strangers should be given the best chair; strangers should be given wine and food; and strangers should be fed. Homer, *Odyssey*, trans. Richard Lattimore (New York: Harper Perennial, 1991) VII.24-180.

[6] Although, given the development of the narrative, it is premature to make any definitive statements about the political structure of the ship, the sailors' democratic, or pseudo-democratic approach to this problem is worthy of note.

The narrator does not believe that the officer who boards the ship is distrustful, based on the man's physical appearance, nor is the narrator particularly skeptical of the officer's behavior; despite the danger of entering a strange vessel, the officer does not display his strength, nor are he and his servant accompanied by any other officers. In response to the local officer, one of the sailors identifies himself as "afore the rest," thereby making himself distinct from the crew (38). Although the sailor's action suggests that he is the foremost man, he is not identified by the narrator as the captain of the ship. Furthermore, it is unclear whether this action has been agreed upon beforehand by the crew, or is the sailor's own idea. If the man who presents himself has been appointed by the crewmen to behave in this way and is not the foremost man, it may be a politically prudent action: in a possibly dangerous situation, it may be unwise for the head of a ship to present himself to an unknown, uninvited, and potentially hostile visitor. Regardless of his official rank and role, it is to this sailor that the island representative presents the scroll that he has carried aboard.

The Scroll or First Communication

Prior to commenting on the contents of the scroll, the narrator chooses to focus on its material: the scroll is of "parchment, (somewhat yellower than our parchment, and shining like the leaves of writing tables, but otherwise soft and flexible)" (38). While the description of the paper may seem trite, it does point to an important insight into these islanders; these people have the technology to produce writing paper superior to that known to the sailors. Not only do the islanders have small boats, and therefore at least some knowledge of sailing, they also have knowledge of parchment production. As such, these islanders, based on initial indications, are not a savage, illiterate people.

The scroll presumably is prepared in advance; given that the sailors have approached the island at night and have been in port so briefly, it is unlikely that the islanders have had sufficient time to draft an official document. As a matter of foreign policy, it seems all who happen upon the island are presented with a scroll similar to the one that is given to the sailors. This scroll contains the first linguistic communication between the islanders and the sailors. The mode of communication is written, rather than spoken. Instead of reading the scroll aloud to the sailors, the officer hands the parchment to the sailor who appears to hold authority.[8] Once the scroll has been delivered, the officer, who has remained silent, departs, leaving "only a servant with [the sailors] to receive [their] answer" (39).

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[7] For a consideration of the significance of the number eight, see White 192.

If this local officer has boarded the ship, why has he not spoken with the sailors? In his essay "Of Negotiating," Bacon discusses the importance of formal communication. He argues that when attempting to communicate with another or others, "[i]t is generally better to deal by speech than by letter."[9] Although a common rule, it does admit of notable exceptions:

> Letters are good, when a man would draw a letter back again; or when it may serve for a man's justification afterwards to produce his own letter; or where it may be danger to be interrupted, or heard by pieces.[10]

In light of Bacon's first exception, it is likely the islanders are awaiting a written response—that they "would draw a letter back again." After the officer disembarks and returns to shore with the rest of the islanders, the officer's servant, without a means of departure, remains on board to receive the sailors' answer. Bacon's second exception—"when it may serve for a man's justification afterwards to produce his own letter"—is also applicable; a written response ensures that there is documented evidence of all communications, for posterity. The third exception—"where it may be danger to be interrupted, or heard by pieces"—is also relevant. While the situation is unlikely to result in interruption, there is a risk that the information may be "heard by pieces," and thus admit of complications. The aforementioned reasons for preferring written to oral communication are applicable to any ship that enters port; however, a further reason presents itself, pertinent to the specific case of these mariners: since the sailors are in deliberation prior to being presented with the scroll, it is likely that any response they choose to give must be discussed in advance by some or all of the crew. Therefore, the choice of written rather than oral communication is politically prudent and must be considered in light of the parchment's content.

In what might be construed as a diplomatically sound approach, the parchment is written in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and Spanish. Multiple languages suggest that the scroll is indeed generic: any number of different peoples are able to understand the islanders' declarations. Notably, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin are both biblical and ancient languages, familiar in their ancient forms only to educated persons.[11] Spanish, on the other hand, is a common language likely familiar to the sailors, as it is spoken in Peru. There are three notable absences from the listed languages: English, Bacon's own tongue and the language of the *New Atlantis*; and Chinese and Japanese, the languages spoken in the intended destination of the sailors. Thus, in Bacon's time, educated Europeans, people from the Americas, those of the Mediterranean, as well as Jews and Christians are presumably able to read this scroll.

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[8] Based on the behavior of this islander, it appears that this island maintains a hierarchical structure, or is attempting to maintain the hierarchical structure that the islanders believe is aboard the ship.

[9] Bacon, *Essays*, "Of Negotiating" 123.

[10] Ibid.

The scroll begins with a warning and a decree. The sailors are forbidden from landing, and must leave port within sixteen days: "Land ye not, none of you; and provide to be gone from this coast in sixteen days" (38).[12] While the sixteen-day time limit seems arbitrary, it is a matter of foreign policy; based on the nature of this warning and decree, one can surmise that the islanders do not appreciate unsolicited visitors. Although the islanders' decrees may seem harsh, they are tempered by an additional caveat whereby it is possible that the sailors may be granted additional time: the aforementioned policy remains in effect, "except if [they] have further time given." This first communication does not clarify by what process and by whom a reprieve would be granted.

Despite the discomforting rulings of the decree—do not land, and leave within sixteen days—the islanders also extend things that "belongeth to mercy" (39). The islanders offer the sailors items which the sailors may want, and assistance which a ship lost at sea may require: potable water, victuals, help for the sick, and repairs. In response, the sailors are asked to "write down [their] wants" (38). Given the offer of supplies and the possibility of additional time in port, the refusal of landing no longer seems born of malice, but rather born of the need for self-protection.

i. Symbols and their Consequences

The parchment is stamped with an insignia, presumably that of the island: "[t]his scroll [i]s signed with a stamp of cherubins' wings, not spread but hanging downwards, and by them a cross" (39). As such, the island's symbols, at least those that appear on this document, are found in both the Old and New Testaments. While the cherub goes unmentioned by Bacon's narrator, the sailors derive great comfort from the cross. Indeed, according to the narrator, the cross is a cause of "great rejoicing, and as it were a certain presage of good." Since the symbols on the scroll are representative of the island, considering these insignia is insightful in coming to understand the islanders.

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[11] According to Simon, Hebrew, Latin, and Greek are "the three languages that humanists insisted as necessary for proper intellectual discourse." Simon 47.

[12] In light of the islanders' rulings, the sailors have asked God to guide them to land, but not for permission to land; when they originally request the miracle, they are not concerned with inhabitants or prohibitions, but merely want to live.

The cherub is a prominent Old Testament image.[13] The first biblical reference to the cherub appears following the fall of man. Having driven Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, God places a cherub at the gate: "So he drove out the man; and he places at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."[14] In this first instance, the cherub is the protector of divine knowledge and a symbol of divine presence; notably, however, the cherub guards the Garden from unwanted encroachment by man. While the Jews wander through the desert, the tabernacle is adorned with cherubs.[15] Additionally, in Solomon's constructed temple in Jerusalem, the cherubs, as in the desert tabernacle, serve as a means of adornment. In the temple, the cherubs have outstretched wings and are embossed with gold.[16] The holiest place in Solomon's temple is under the outstretched wings of the cherub, namely the inner sanctuary where the Ark of the Covenant is placed. In other words, the inner sanctuary and the ark are cradled within the protective span of the wings of two cherubs.[17]

Unlike in Solomon's temple, the wings of the cherub on the island's parchment point downward, towards the ground. Whereas in the temple the outstretched wings symbolize the heavenly realm, the islanders' cherub seems to symbolize the earthly realm. Pointing downwards, then, suggests a local concern with the mundane. Furthermore, whereas in Eden the cherub is protector of the divine garden, the islanders' cherub is protector of this worldly island.[18] While discussing the order of heaven in *The Advancement of Learning*, Bacon presents his "celestial hierarchy." Proceeding downward from God, who tops the order, there are angelic beings of two types: the seraphim, "angels of Love," who are of the highest order; and the cherubim, "angels of Light," who are of the second order.[19] Based on Bacon's hierarchy, angels of love—and presumably love itself—are placed above angels of light—and presumably knowledge itself. Since the islanders have the symbol of knowledge as their insignia, their choice suggests that they value knowledge above love.

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[13] For a more detailed consideration of the cherub in Renaissance iconography and its significance in the *New Atlantis*, see Elizabeth McCutcheon, "Bacon and the cherubim: an iconographical reading of the *New Atlantis*," *English Literary Renaissance* 2:3 (1972).

[14] Genesis 3:24.

[15] For the adornment of the tabernacle, see Exodus 25:18-22, 26:31, 36:8; 1 Samuel 4:4; 2 Samuel 6:2; 2 Kings 19:15; Psalms 80:1, 99:1; and Isaiah 37:16. Where God rides upon a cherub, see 2 Samuel 22:11; and Psalm 18:10. For or a description of the cherub, see Ezekiel 1:5-14, 10:1-22. And for the cherubs as destroyers on behalf of God, see Ezekiel 28:16.

[16] 1 Kings 6:23-29.

[17] See 1 Kings 8:6-7; and 2 Chronicles 5:7-8.

[18] Lampert argues that the reason the cherubs' wings hang downwards is to indicate that "they no longer need to guard Eden with outstretched wings against intruders from east of Eden." Why this is the case remains unclear in Lampert's work. Lampert, *Nietzsche and Modern Times* 64.

At this point in the text, little about the islanders can be determined conclusively. That being said, a number of important insights have been revealed during this first meeting, which are essential to keep in mind throughout the narrator's account. First, the islanders are clearly protective of their state. Unsolicited visitation is not condoned. However, this is not a hard and fast rule. Given the proper circumstances, the specifics of which remain unclear, the islanders are willing to admit of exceptions. There is a possibility that the sailors may be granted a stay of departure. Additionally, the islanders, despite forbidding disembarkment, are willing to provide the sailors with provisions, those that are required by men who have spent at least one year at sea. Clearly, these locals are unwilling to let the sailors to starve within the confines of their port. On the one hand, the sailors expressly are prohibited from coming ashore. On the other hand, the islanders intend to ensure that the sailors are treated mercifully. It appears that these unknown islanders are both self-protective, and concerned with the well-being of their uninvited guests.

ii. The Response of the Sailors

Prior to presenting the sailors' response to the scroll, the narrator discusses the emotional condition of his comrades. The sailors are "much perplexed" by the behavior of the islanders (39). While they are "troubled" by the refusal of landing, they are comforted "not a little" by the humanity and languages of the islanders, and particularly by the cross embossed on the scroll, which is a cause of "great rejoicing, and...a certain presage of good." Puzzled by the behavior of the islanders, the sailors, for the second time, consult amongst themselves. As before, the specific content of the discussion is not revealed.

While the sailors respond in Spanish to the islanders' decree, this does not indicate decisively that they are of Spanish origin. They have just spent a year in Peru, and, if they were not Spanish speaking prior to their arrival, presumably some of the sailors have learned the language during their stay. Echoing the narrator's words at the beginning of the *New Atlantis*, the sailors respond that they have experienced "calms and contrary winds [rather] than any tempests" (39); thus, their ship is not in need of repair. It is the refusal of landing with which the sailors take issue. We are informed at this point that many of the sailors are critically ill; if denied medical attention, they are likely to die.[20] Here, the sailors appeal to the Christian mercy and Christian duty, rather than to the political savvy, of the islanders: if the sailors die whilst anchored in port, then the islanders are responsible in part for their deaths.

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[19] Bacon, *Advancement* I.vi.3.

In their response, the sailors reveal that they have some goods—"some little store of merchandise"[21]—which they offer as recompense for the assistance of the islanders (39). In a show of their gratitude, the sailors offer the servant some money, as payment for his services, and a piece of crimson velvet as a gift for the officer. The servant's reaction is strange, according to the narrator's account: "the servant took them not, nor would he scarce look upon them." While the servant refuses the gifts, his actions are not ungracious. Receiving unwarranted gifts is not part of his task; rather, his duty is to obtain the response of the sailors, not to collect gifts.

With the sailors' requests presented and the condition of the ill disclosed, the local servant departs from the ship. None of the particular wants made directly to the islanders are delineated by the narrator to the reader. Moreover, following the departure of the servant, the sailors are left alone for a period of three hours; the narrator does not reveal the activities of the sailors or the content of any conversations which may have occurred during that time.

The Reverend Man

Within three hours of the servant's departure, a second island envoy approaches the ship. There are four noteworthy differences between the first interaction and the current one. First, the boat used by the islanders during their initial communication is different from this boat; the boat in which the reverend man arrives is described, by the narrator, as "gilt" (40). A second difference is also related: unlike the previous visit, there is a man of place aboard the islanders' boat. The reverend man's attire and his mode of transportation are more ornate than the attire of the man who first boarded the ship and the boat in which he traveled. Clearly, the sailors associate these outward displays with one who is authoritative, so much so that the narrator describes this man as "reverend." Third, unlike the previous meeting which transpires aboard the ship, throughout this encounter the islanders remain at sea. Last, during the first encounter, there are eight islanders aboard a single boat; this time, however, there are five people in the gilt boat, and twenty additional men in a second boat. The presence of the second boat seems superfluous.

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[20] In Psalm 107, the Israelites' illness is caused by past indiscretions. Upon confirmation that the sailors indeed are ill, questions arise about their history.

[21] That the ship contains some merchandise may be helpful in determining the purpose of the ship's journey.

One might speculate that it serves a protective purpose: that this second boat is for security purposes, despite not being mentioned by the narrator as such, may be confirmed by the manner in which the meeting is conducted. While at sea, the boat of the reverend man "come[s] within a flight-shot of [the] ship." Positioned in this way, the islanders would be able to attack the ship, if such action were deemed necessary. With the option of firing at the ship, the islanders signal the sailors to meet their small boat. Obeying the islanders' signs, the sailors send forth a boat; mimicking the islanders, the sailors' boat contains five men, one of whom is identified by the narrator as their second foremost man. Specifically acknowledged as such, the presence of the second foremost sailor indicates that the sailors adhere to a hierarchy of some sort. When they are six yards from the islanders' boats, the sailors are ordered to stay.

There are now four boats at sea: the two boats of the islanders, totaling twenty-five men; the ship, containing an unknown number of sailors; and the boat of the sailors, containing five men. Communication is initiated by the reverend man in Spanish, the language of the sailors' response to the islanders' scroll. Completely devoid of pleasantries, the reverend man begins abruptly. His opening remarks are comprised of two distinct features: the first is in the form of a question—"Are ye Christians" (40); the second is an oath, in the name of the Saviour, administered to the sailors. A second bifurcation is present in the oath: first, that the sailors vow they are not pirates; and second, that they swear they have not shed blood, either lawfully or unlawfully, within forty days. The manner and content of the sailors' responses apparently will determine the way in which they are henceforth treated by the islanders.

There are two plausible outcomes derivative of the sailors' answers: first, the possibility that nothing changes, and the sailors remain in the island's port for a maximum of sixteen days followed by their departure; and second, the potential that the sailors' situation does change, for better or worse. If the latter occurs, the sailors' situation can change in four ways: first, the sailors may be executed; second, the sailors may be compelled to leave immediately, and likely die at sea; third, the sailors may be granted a continuance of stay, and remain in port for a longer period of time than the customary allotment of sixteen days; and fourth, the sailors may be permitted to disembark, and face an unknown future on the island. Thus, the sailors' responses, entrusted to the second foremost man, are of the utmost importance.

i. Are Ye Christians?

By their own actions, the islanders have made clear, at least on some level, that they are aware of Christianity and the most identifiable symbol associated with this religion. Based on the cross that embosses the parchment which the islanders sent to the ship, the sailors feel a "great rejoicing, and…a certain presage of good" (39). Since the sailors are gladdened by the presence of the cross, it is likely that they expect to receive treatment which accords with the primary tenets of Christianity: mercy, charity, and humanity. As indicated by the cross, the appropriate answer to the reverend man's question—"Are ye Christians?" (40)—seems implicit in the question itself. As the narrator notes, "fearing the less, because of the cross [they] had seen," the second foremost man answers that they are Christians.[22] Since the second foremost man has responded in the affirmative, and presumably correctly, one is left to ponder the possible outcomes were he to have answered in the negative: would the sailors have been identified as infidels and killed? Would the islanders, if they are evangelical, have attempted to convert their visitors? Would it have mattered with what religion the sailors identified themselves? Or, given the admittedly merciful nature of these islanders, would they still have helped these "lost men?"

On behalf of the sailors, the second foremost man, without public deliberation with his companions, answers: "We were" (40). There have been two previous indications of the sailors' Christianity: first, in the face of death, the sailors have appealed to God; and second, the sailors have recognized the "sign of the cross" (39) as a religious symbol, and have been gladdened by it. That being said, since the narrator does not confirm that they are indeed Christians, this affirmation may be based on an ulterior motive: their answer is affected by fear, as the sailors are apprehensive to answer otherwise.

Equally questionable, at this textual juncture, is the piety of the islanders. Despite the moratorium on landing and the limitation on docking, the islanders offer the sailors "that which belongeth to mercy" (39). Mercy is a primary tenet of Christianity. The Christian leaning of the islanders is further confirmed, at least to the satisfaction of the sailors, by the symbol of the cross that appears on the official scroll. The cross, however, is accompanied by the cherub—an Old Testament symbol of divine presence and security. Moreover, there are two oddities in the reverend man's behavior and dress that run contrary to Christian tradition: first, the reverend man is described as wearing a turban, which is not a traditional Christian headdress; and second, responding to the sailors' affirmation of their Christianity, the officer raises his hand to heaven and then kisses it, perhaps mimicking the Jewish gesture associated with the Mezuzah.[23]

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[22] According to Innes, the reverend man's question—"Are ye Christians?"—points to the non-sectarian concern of the islanders: the reverend man "is above sectarian disputes." Innes 15.

[23] According to Jewish law, "[i]t is a divine command to affix a mezuzah to every door of the house." Rabbi Solomon Ganzfried, *Code of Jewish Law: Kitzur Shulhan Aruh*, trans. Hyman E. Goldin rev. ed (New York: Hebrew Publishing Company, 1961) 11:1, 34. Once the mezuzah has been attached to every door, it is tradition that it must be kissed upon entering and exiting. According to Talmudic Law, "[i]t is tradition to kiss a holy object as a gesture of reverence. Many Jews follow the custom (of talmudic origin)

Regardless of the actual religiosity of the islanders or the sailors, the reverend man, sufficiently satisfied by the second foremost man's response, proceeds to administer the oath.

ii. The Oath to the Saviour

Having established the Christianity of the sailors to the satisfaction of the reverend man (and perhaps the reader), the sailors are asked to take an oath. When the sailors are asked if they are Christians, an affirmation is all that is required. Now, however, the sailors are asked to "swear (all of you) by the merits of the Saviour" (40). One might ask why they have not been asked to swear by the merits of the Savior that they are indeed Christian. An oath sworn to Jesus is irrelevant if one does not believe in Jesus. Thus, in order to confirm the veracity of an oath to the Saviour, one's belief in the Saviour first must be established.

Based on Christian Scripture, the making of oaths in the name of God, or to God, is expressly forbidden. Indeed, in the management of oaths, there is a distinct disjunction between Jewish law and Christian law. In the Old Testament, swearing by God is permissible, as long as the oath in question is not false.[24] There are two requisites in the Old Testament which evidence the veracity of an oath: first, one must intend to carry out the oath at the time it is made; and second, one must actually carry out the oath. By the time of the Prophets, however, there is general estrangement between one's swearing an oath and one's intention to follow it.[25] Thus, in his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus attempts to rectify the problem of swearing false oaths to God. In Matthew, Jesus emphasizes that one not "swear at all."[26] In the New Testament, the Old Testament teaching on oaths and the swearing thereof is replaced by man's word. What has once been sanctified by an oath is now sanctified by a simple yes or no: "But above all things, my

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of touching the mezuza with the fingertips, kissing them, and reciting, 'May God protect my going out and coming in, now and forever.'" Alfred J. Kolatch, *The Book of Jewish Why* (New York: Jonathan David Publishers, Inc., 1981) 116. Although this typically Jewish gesture may seem out of place in an apparently Christian setting, anticipating the text, it becomes clearer that the Christianity of the islanders is not as orthodox as initially implied.

[24] There are three important Old Testament examples of swearing to the Lord's name: "And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of your God: I am the Lord" (Leviticus 19:12); "If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth" (Numbers 30:2); "When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be a sin in thee" (Deuteronomy 23:21).

[25] Both Jeremiah and Hosea lament the lack of truthfulness in the hearts of those swearing oaths (Jeremiah 5:1-2; and Hosea 4:1-2).

[26] Matthew 5:34.

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brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by earth, neither by another oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay."[27] As a matter of foreign policy, the islanders are not content with a simple yes or no. Instead, they require a higher arbiter by which to affirm the truth of the sailors' responses: the islanders' apparent Christian mercy has practical limitations.

The second aspect of the reverend man's question is biform; the sailors must swear by the Saviour "that [they] are no pirates, nor have shed blood lawfully or unlawfully within forty days past" (40). Encompassed within the reverend man's questions are the desired answers; if the sailors are not pirates, nor have shed blood lawfully or unlawfully in the last forty days, they "may have licence to come on land." The sailors need only follow the directions of the reverend man to come ashore.

iii. Piracy

Of primary concern to the islanders is the threat of piracy.[28] Pirate ships do not adhere to the laws of any particular nation; rather, they openly prey upon those who cross their paths. If these sailors are pirates, they pose a threat to the islanders. However, if these sailors are not pirates, they are subject to the laws of their nation of origin, and, as a result, the ship is subject to codified maritime law and procedure. As long as the sailors are not pirates, they must be on a legitimate mission of some sort authorized by their state.

By positing that the sailors may be pirates, the reverend man brings an important issue to the fore: what is the purpose of their expedition? As yet, the precise purpose of the voyage remains ambiguous, which suggests that the purpose of this journey cannot be essential to a comprehensive understanding of the text; if it is, Bacon must reveal the ship's mission. Nevertheless, speculations regarding their purpose provide some interesting insights into various possibilities, which in turn alter the way in which we view the sailors. Like the islanders, the reader, if he has not done so already, must pause to consider the nature of this crew and its intentions. If the voyage is one of trade, then the sailors are on legitimate business: economic enterprise. However, as a merchant vessel, one expects the ship to be equipped with more than "some little store of merchandise" (39).[29] Given that they do not have significant supplies, one must infer an alternate purpose for the voyage. There is a possibility that they are missionaries, intending to spread the gospel. While the sailors have prayed to God (37) and affirmed their Christianity (40), there does not appear to be a priest aboard, nor is prayer mentioned as a daily ritual. Alternately, this may be a military vessel. However, given that there does not appear to be a clear chain of command or any mention of using force against the islanders, these sailors do not seem to be soldiers. On the other hand, like the Israelites in Psalm 107, they may be searching for a home. If the sailors are indeed pioneers, one might wonder why they make no mention of women nor discuss the possibility of settlement. A final possibility presents itself: these sailors are explorers. If this is indeed the case, the express purpose of their trip is to chart the unexplored ocean in which they find themselves. The sailors, then, are in search of new places, new people, new ideas, and thus new opportunities. Since Bacon's narrator does not elucidate the purpose of the journey, and the islanders are not compelled to investigate the ship's precise mission, one must be satisfied, along with the islanders, that the sailors are not pirates. Thus, the actual purpose of the expedition remains a matter for speculation.

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[27] James 5:12.

[28] Hamlet, on his way to England, is abducted by pirates. Hamlet's abduction suggests that piracy is prevalent during the Renaissance. William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. Harold Jenkins (London: The Arden Shakespeare, 1982) IV.vii.12-28.

[29] This may, however, be dissembling: the sailors may not want the islanders to confiscate their goods.

iv. Shedding Blood

The last caveat of the oath regards the shedding of blood: first, that it has not occurred within forty days; and second, that it has been neither lawful nor unlawful. Obviously, the islanders are assessing the behavior of the sailors prior to their arrival in port. Only retrospectively are the sailors made aware of the importance of their previous actions. Since no explanation is provided for the forty-day embargo on shedding blood, the reader is compelled to consider pertinent historical references to forty-day periods.[30] Significantly, forty is a recurring biblical number. In the time of Noah, the rains last forty days and forty nights—the amount of time required to submerge the entire earth in water, thereby eradicating all life not aboard the ark.[31] During the Exodus, having escaped from slavery at the hands of the Egyptians, the Jews wander through the desert for forty years—the period of time required to ensure that a new generation, one not shackled by a history of slavery, is able to enter the promised land.[32] During the Exodus, to receive the laws from God, Moses spends forty days and forty nights atop Mount

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[30] Simon succinctly notes, "From the Biblical tradition, forty days is the period for moral purification of the righteous man as a prelude to divine revelation. It is a time for repentance and a time to test man's worthiness for physical and spiritual redemption." He does not, however, mention the retrospective importance of the sailors' behavior. Simon 46; also see White 192.

[31] Genesis 7:4, 7:12, 8:6.

[32] Exodus 16:35; Numbers 14:33-34, 32:13; Deuteronomy 2:7, 8:2, 8:4, 29:5; Joshua 5:6; Nehemiah 9:21; Psalm 95:10; Amos 2:10, 5:25; Acts 7:30, 7:36, 7:42, 13:21; Hebrews 3:9, 3:17.

Sinai.[33] Also, there is the temptation of Christ. At the outset of his public ministry, Jesus is "led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted."[34] The express purpose of Jesus' expedition is to test his resistance to the temptations of the devil. During the entirety of his forty-day and forty-night stay in the desert, Jesus fasts. Numerologically then, forty is a significant biblical number, one representing sacred periods of time and profound epochs of change.[35]

The second clause of the oath is as significant as the first clause. The islanders seem to make no distinction between lawful and unlawful shedding of blood. Shedding blood, however, is an ambiguous term.[36] Barring accidents and war, aboard a ship a number of circumstances, both fatal and otherwise, can result in spilt blood: ship-sanctioned punishment, such as whipping, for the purpose of reform rather than death; fighting amongst the sailors that does or does not result in death; cannibalism; or capital punishment. Alternately, like the sacrifice of Jonah, who is thrown into the sea by his shipmates to appease a wrathful God, the sailors aboard this ship may have sacrificed one of their own to incite the stagnant winds.[37] Most striking, however, is the apparent fact that the sailors, to the best of our knowledge, have been at sea more than forty consecutive days and have not happened upon any other islands or ships during that time. Consequently, if the sailors have shed blood in the last forty days, it must have been the blood of their fellow sailors. If the murder is lawful, since they have denied being pirates, the legality is derived from the maritime law of the ship's country of origin. Significantly, the islanders do not seem to recognize the legitimacy of the laws of the sailors' home country. The islanders make no distinction between any of the aforementioned instances of blood shedding, all of which prohibit entrance onto the island. Therefore, in its most extreme case, there can be no state-sanctioned murder, or at least no capital punishment authorized by other states.

Encouraged by the reverend man, the sailors "[a]re all ready to take [the] oath" (40): they are ready to swear by the Saviour that they are not pirates, nor have they shed blood lawfully or unlawfully in the last forty days. Preparedness to take an oath does not necessarily affirm its veracity. Whether or not they are pirates or have shed blood, is not explicit in the narrator's account.[38] Based on the sailor's word and God's presence as a witness, the oath is accepted and officially recorded by the islanders, as "a notary ma[k]e[s] an entry of this act." With the successful completion of procedure, the sailors are now granted "license to come on land."

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[33] Exodus 24:18, 34:28; Deuteronomy 9:11, 9:18, 9:25, 10:10.

[34] Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; and Luke 4:1-13.

[35] For additional Biblical references to forty, see Genesis 50:3; Judges 5:31, 8:28, 13:1; 1 Kings 11:42, 19:8; 1 Chronicles 29:27; 2 Chronicles 9:30, 24:1; Ezekiel 4:6, 29:11-13; Jonah 3:4; Acts 1:3; and Numbers 13:25.

[36] Paterson interprets this ambiguous phrase—namely, "shed blood"—as intended to apply only to murder. Paterson, "Baconian Science" 102-104.

[37] One also might consider the islanders' injunction against shedding blood in light of Agamemnon's sacrifice of his daughter, prior to the departure to Troy. Agamemnon's sacrificial murder, at the behest of a seer, is for the express purpose of raising the wind.

v. The Reverend Man's Explanation of his Behavior

At this point, like the sailors, the reader reasonably expects all the sailors to be permitted to land. Instead, a somewhat strange interaction ensues between the sailors and the reverend man. It begins with a conversation between the great reverend man and one of his attendants. Oddly, the discussion is whispered.[39] Following their private conversation, the attendant speaks on behalf of the officer. We must recall that the ship has already been boarded. Now, however, the islanders have chosen not to come aboard; rather, they have requested a conversation at sea. In an unsolicited explanation to the sailors, the attendant clarifies, on behalf of the reverend man whom he calls a lord, "that it is not of pride or greatness that he cometh not aboard your ship; but for that…you have many sick amongst you" (40). As the attendant further explains, the reverend man has been "warned by the Conservator of Health of the city that he should keep a distance." In order to understand this perplexing interaction, a number of points must be considered: the content of the apology, the context of the apology, the rationale of the islanders, and the response of the sailors.

The officer singularly is identified three times by his attendant: first, that "it is not because of pride or greatness that he cometh not aboard your ship" (40); second, that "he was warned by the Conservator of Health;" third, that the warning specifies "he should keep a distance." Based on the unique position of the reverend man, the prohibition from boarding the ship seems applicable only to him. A number of insights into the nature of these islanders are provided by this interaction. Initially, one might ask why the reverend man does not speak himself; despite having spoken earlier, he now chooses to refrain, permitting a man of lesser rank to speak on his behalf. While there are topics acceptable for a lord to address and those deemed unacceptable, in this situation, it is unclear why the lord cannot discuss his own behavior. Is the lord embarrassed? Is he unable to lie, and thus the words must be spoken by one of a lower station? Despite uncertainty as to the reasons behind the explanation and the strange manner in which it is presented, a number of points seem clear. First, the island adheres to a strict hierarchical system, mandated by one's position in the state: one's political rank dictates one's social behavior. Second, there is a bureaucratic organization on the island. The Conservator of Health presumably is responsible for the physical well-being of the islanders.[40] However, given that the narrator never mentions a visit by the Conservator or the arrival of an attendant to examine the ill, the Conservator remains unaware of the exact nature of the sailors' illness. Thus, the islanders have clearly heeded the warning of the sailors and accepted the severity of the situation. From the perspective of the islanders, the injunction prohibiting the reverend man from boarding the ship is understandable. The sailors may be suffering from infectious illnesses or illnesses hitherto unknown on the island. As history has shown, the arrival of new disease can have debilitating effects on native populations. Strangely, the Conservator's injunction only works in one direction: the prohibition does not preclude the sailors—whole and ill—from disembarking. Thus, the reader is compelled to question the severity of the illness, the gravity of the presumed threat to the island, and the explanation the attendant provides on behalf of the officer. The third insight revealed by the reverend man's apology is a matter of manners: the islanders look down upon both pride and greatness. Hence, the reverend man ensures that the sailors are made aware that his behavior is not an act of undue arrogance or self-importance.

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[38] Similarly, Paterson states, "It is obviously doubtful that any such oath would serve to keep out real pirates and murderers, especially those made desperate by starvation and illness." Paterson, "Baconian Science" 102.

[39] The narrator distinguishes between the servant and the reverend man's conversation, and the servant who then speaks "aloud." It follows that the conversation between the servant and the reverend man was not aloud.

The sailors' response can be construed as appropriate. Recognizing the local disdain for pride and greatness, the sailors emphasize their own modesty. As "humble servants," they acknowledge the "great honour and singular humanity" of the islanders (40). Additionally, the sailors attempt to ameliorate the concerns regarding the undiagnosed illness that has contaminated the ship. Responding to the cautions of the Conservator of Health, the sailors state that they "hop[e] well that the nature of the sickness…[i]s not infectious." This offer of goodwill, despite the potential severity of the illness, intimates that the sailors do not intentionally seek to harm the islanders. Thus, the sailors acknowledge those qualities—honor and humanity—that have been identified as virtues by the islanders, provide gratitude, and indicate that they mean no harm to the island.

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[40] The office of the Conservator of Health is "found in Renaissance Italy, if not perhaps early modern London." Richard Serjeanston, "Natural knowledge in the *New Atlantis*," *Francis Bacon's New Atlantis: New Interdisciplinary Essays*, ed. Bronwen Price (New York: Manchester University Press, 2002) 90.

Twice Paid

Having provided an explanation, the reverend man departs, and the sailors' boat returns to their ship. Again, the sailors are left alone, and, as in the previous case, the content of their conversation is not divulged. Soon after the encounter with the reverend man, a notary boards the ship. Given the express warning of the Conservator of Health which prohibits the reverend man from coming aboard, that the ship is now being boarded by an islander casts some doubt on the actual concern of infection and on the attendant's explanation of the reverend man's behavior. The notary, however, does not come without protection; he brings a "preservative against infection"—similar to an orange, which the narrator describes as "between orange-tawny and scarlet, which cast a most excellent odour" (41). Two important events occur while the notary is aboard: first, he again administers the oath; and second, he informs the sailors of the schedule for the following day.

The oath—that they are neither pirates nor have shed blood lawfully or unlawfully within forty days—is now officially given and recorded. When first administered, the second foremost man responded on behalf of the entire crew. Now the oath is administered to the entire crew; each of the sailors must affirm his Christianity, and swear that he is not a pirate and has not shed blood, either lawfully or unlawfully, in the last forty days. In the first instance, the oath is administered to "the merits of the Saviour" (40). In this second instance, the Saviour in question is made explicit. Here, the oath is sworn "[b]y the name of Jesus and his merits" (41). The island obviously adheres to a strict bureaucratic protocol: the second foremost man's response to the oath has already been recorded, yet the oath is to be given again and recorded for each individual sailor. Perhaps, since the terms of the sailors' stay have been altered, and they have been permitted to land, the oath must again be recorded for each man.

In addition, the notary informs the sailors of the schedule for the following day. At six o'clock the next morning, the sailors, both whole and sick, are to be brought to the Strangers' House—an institution of which they know nothing, and which is first mentioned here. As before, the sailors offer the notary some reward. The constancy with which the sailors offer additional compensation seems customary in their culture, a practice which is in stark contrast to the custom of the island. Refusing the sailors' gift, as has the servant before him, the notary explains that to be "twice paid," or to "taketh rewards," is frowned upon (41).[41] According to the narrator's interpretation of the notary's explanation, the state must provide a "salary sufficient." There is no compulsion to accept extraneous gifts, as each individual's needs are assured by his state administered salary.

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[41] Paterson notes that the recurrent theme of being twice paid "might refer both to Bacon's personal history and his diagnosis of the ills of office-selling, which was in his day a feature of state finance." Paterson, "Baconian Science" 100-101.

Having recorded the sailors' oath and thus having completed the purpose of his visit, the notary departs. With the notary's exit, one is left to ponder two issues: what is the economic structure of the island, and what is the Strangers' House? Since the sailors know they are to be installed in the Strangers' House, the nature of their accommodations and their treatment by the islanders remain to be seen.

Considerations on the Island and the Islanders

In the opening section of the text, instead of arriving in China and Japan, Bacon's sailors have become lost in the South Sea and are on the verge of death. The sailors' prayer for land has been granted: not only are they permitted to come ashore, but they also are to be accommodated in a house designed for strangers. These islanders, who are to host the sailors for the time being, require preliminary consideration.

While many of the islanders' actions are unclear, it is evident that they do not take well to strangers. Based on their behavior, the island is self-protective and has established methods to ensure her sovereignty. Presentation of the scroll is the first course of action when an uninvited ship enters the port; no uninvited stranger is granted immediate landing rights, and no uninvited ship may remain in harbor for more than sixteen days. Although the prohibitions against strangers may seem unduly harsh, they do accomplish a certain end: the aforementioned decrees ensure that no strangers can enter the island without permission. However, these prohibitions do admit of exceptions. It is possible, through an undisclosed process, to obtain further time.

In reference to the manner in which the first officer boards the ship, the narrator makes note that he does so "without any show of distrust" and without any security (38). While there is no explicit discussion of force, there is a subtle yet implicit reference to the islanders' strength: when he approaches the sailors, the reverend man's boat stops within a flight-shot of the ship. It is possible, with arrows or cannons, for these islanders, perhaps the twenty men in the second boat, to attack. Nevertheless, the islanders' lack of fear regarding the sailors is further indicated by the position of the servant who, after the officer and the rest of the islanders depart, remains aboard without protection or a means of immediate departure. Therefore, the refusal of landing does not seem to have resulted from fear of these particular sailors, but rather from a desire to protect the island's inhabitants.

The apparent benevolence of these islanders, demonstrated by their willingness to provide aid, is made questionable by the behavior of the reverend man. Despite having been boarded by the officer and the servant, and despite the later boarding by the notary, the reverend man does not board the vessel. The apology of the reverend man seems out of place. That it is orated on behalf of the reverend man by his attendant further complicates the explanation: neither "pride or greatness" are the reasons the reverend man does not board (40). However, in light of the fact that the officer who first presents the sailors with the scroll, the servant who first receives their answer, and the notary who administers the oath all board the ship, both pride and greatness seem to be likely motivations for the reverend man's behavior. Warnings issued by the Conservator of Health apply only to the reverend man, and not to the men of lesser rank. Moreover, health concerns do not prohibit the sailors, both "whole and...sick," from coming ashore (41). Suffice it to say, on reflection, the explanation of the reverend man's attendant does not adequately account for the reverend man's actions.

Granting "license to come on land" is based on three criteria (39): the sailors' affirmation of their Christianity; their negation of piracy; and their negation of having shed blood, whether lawful or unlawful, in the last forty days. Since the appropriate answers are presented in the questions, the sailors only need follow the encouragement of the reverend man in order to be granted permission to disembark. It seems that piety, legitimacy, and peacefulness are deemed important by the islanders.[42]

This island appears to provide "salary sufficient" (40). Money, then, is not at issue. Despite attempts by the sailors to provide the servant and notary with gifts, both men refuse the sailors' offers. Unlike the practices of the sailors' place of origin, or possibly those of Peru, this island does not accept additional recompense. The state provides the people appropriate remuneration. In this regard, the island's practice points to an advanced culture, one in which bribery and gift-giving in return for services rendered are looked down upon.

Based on first impressions, very few clear assessments can be made about the island on which the sailors have arrived, or about the men who have offered these "lost men" asylum (37). On the one hand, these are a merciful people with languages and humanity; on the other hand, the conditions of the sailors' stay are not clear. First, they are forbidden from landing; now they are being billeted in the Strangers' House, an institution about which nothing is known. In addition, if correctly answering three questions permits the sailors to land, what happens if the sailors incorrectly answer the next three questions? Although the sailors have little choice but to accept the mercy of these islanders, it is important for the reader to remember that the sailors are strangers to this island, and these islanders are strangers to both the sailors and the readers. These sailors may face greater dangers on shore than they have at sea; they may be foregoing death at sea, for death on land at the hands of the inhabitants of this fair city.

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[42] According to Weinberger, "Taken together, the oath and the 'psalm' [107] hint that Bensalemite law provides a grace superior to that of Christ, that Bensalemite law surpasses both the Old and New Testament laws, but in a way that would count recent killing worse than old murder." Weinberger, "Science and Rule" 874. Alternately, Paterson argues "that as a test of moral fitness to land[, the oath's] outstanding characteristic is a demand that one be willing to subordinate all existing moral and legal distinctions to the supreme imperative of preserving human life." Paterson, "Baconian Science" 104.

As arranged with the notary the previous day, an islander arrives at the ship early in the morning; this is the same officer who initially boarded the ship and presented the sailors with the scroll (38). At this point, the ship has been boarded four times by three islanders: twice by this officer, once by a servant, and once by a notary. In response to the islanders' overtures, the sailors have partaken in three conversations with the islanders: one with the reverend man and his attendant, one with the notary, and now this conversation with the officer. Since this is the same officer who originally boarded the ship, a comparative consideration of the two interactions is helpful.

To begin, one must contrast the officer's previous behavior with his current conduct. A number of points of interest arise in the first meeting: first, the officer arrives in a boat with seven other men; second, he likely boards the ship with only a servant; third, he presents the sailors with a scroll; fourth, he is silent throughout the interaction; and last, he makes "no show of distrust at all" (38-39). During the second meeting, the officer behaves as follows: first, no mention is made of other islanders in the boat with the officer; second, he likely boards the ship alone; third, he is the officer who is to ferry the sailors to the Strangers' House; fourth, he speaks with the sailors; and last, although it is not made explicit by Bacon's narrator, the officer's demeanor indicates that he is not distrustful. When the sailors first arrive in port, they are strangers: they are unknown and unsolicited foreigners. Now, however, the sailors have been invited to disembark, and the officer's conduct points to the alteration in their circumstances; the sailors are now invited guests.

The invitation to come ashore has been offered by the reverend man and made explicit by the notary. There are noteworthy differences and similarities between the conversation the sailors have had with the reverend man, the notary, and this officer: as discussed previously, the reverend man arrives with two boats, the first containing five men and the second containing twenty men; second, the reverend man does not board the sailors' ship, but instead remains in his own craft while they converse across the water; third, the reverend man's task is to administer the islanders' questions to which the sailors' answers determine whether or not they may come ashore; fourth, although the reverend man questions the sailors, it is his subordinate who provides the explanation for his behavior; and last, the attendant expresses the reverend man's fear regarding the sailors' illness.

When the differences are considered, it becomes clear that the reverend man is higher in rank than the officer. The health concerns, issued by the Conservator of Health and made known by the reverend man's attendant, apply only to the reverend man. Neither the officer nor the notary are prohibited from boarding by the Conservator's injunction; however, whereas the notary carries "a preservative against infection," the officer arrives without protection (41). Although the officer has been exposed to the illness already, he does not seem concerned, as suggested by his return. The reverend man's explanation, namely his fear of disease, seems to prove false: not only do both the notary and the officer board the ship after the islanders have learned of the crew's sickness, but the sailors are also permitted to disembark. Therefore, another explanation for the reverend man's behavior must be sought.

Once the officer comes aboard, he initiates conversation with an apology; he regrets the early hour, but all day is required to complete their task—establishing the sailors in the Strangers' House. This is the second apology which the sailors have received from an islander. The first is issued on behalf of the reverend man by his attendant; regret is expressed regarding the location of the conversation—at sea—and explanation is found in the presumed severity of the sailors' illness. In the present case, the officer speaks for himself: "he prevented the hour, because [they] might have the whole day before [them] for [their] business" (41). This apology is unwarranted. The early hour for this meeting has been established the previous day by the notary. Six o'clock in the morning is the scheduled time. Thus, from the narration and the officer's explanation, the actual time of his arrival is unclear: it may be six o'clock, the appointed time, in which case the officer is apologizing for the time because it is early; or, the officer may have arrived prior to the appointed time and is apologizing for the time because he is unexpectedly early. In addition to his apology, the officer provides an explanation for his behavior. Unlike the reverend man's attendant who credits the Conservator of Health with the injunction against boarding, the officer simply explains that they have much work and must "have the whole day before [them] for [their] business." On the advice of the officer, six of the sailors disembark while the rest remain on board. These six sailors are to inspect the Strangers' House and assist in the preliminary preparations; only after everything is arranged will the rest of the crew be permitted to come ashore.

Having previously referred to themselves as "lost men" (37) and "humble servants" (40), the sailors now self-identify as "desolate strangers" (41). In doing so, they explicitly emphasize their isolation from their own people while simultaneously highlighting their foreignness in relation to the people who have offered them shelter. Moreover, by calling themselves strangers, the sailors reveal their preconception of the Strangers' House; as evidenced by its title, the Strangers' House is intended for destitute strangers. Making no mention of the early hour, the sailors, no longer offering gifts, instead promise a divine reward for the officer's treatment.

Although the sailors' gratitude is based on the "care which [the officer] took of desolate strangers" (41), nothing has been done thus far for the sailors: the islanders have guaranteed "all that belongeth to mercy" as pertains to supplies (39) and, once the right of landing is granted, accommodation at the Strangers' House. However, neither of these two assurances has been fulfilled yet. Moreover, no mention is made of provisions for the sailors who remain aboard the ship while the Strangers' House is being viewed. As such, the divine compensation, as dispensed by the sailors to the officer, is based on speculation rather than action: it is preemptive.

Six of the sailors, including the narrator, accompany the officer ashore. As elsewhere in the text, Bacon's narrator provides only a brief account of the events that transpire, thereby raising more questions than providing answers; consequently, it remains the task of the reader to flesh out the details. These mariners have not been on land in at least one year, and undoubtedly all desire sanction to come ashore. According to the narrator, the sailors have been "thinking every minute long till [they] were on land" (38). And yet, no mention is made about the manner in which the sailors in the entourage are chosen, or who is selected; Bacon's mysterious narrator is the only member of the landing party who is identified explicitly: including the narrator, six sailors of unidentified rank and quality compose this initial landing party. Although the precise number of crew is not yet known, it is unlikely that six is a substantial number. Despite this distinction awarded the envoys, the narrator does not discuss any jubilation on the part of the six sailors.

Once on land, the officer, as a "servant and guide," leads the sailors "through three fair streets" (41). The streets are appropriate to the "fair city" (40), described when the ship first arrives in port. Since the narrator has already assessed the gestures of the islanders (38), the behavior of the officer and the servant to whom the sailors offer a reward (39), and the attire of the reverend man (39), he has thus far been able to interpret the behavior and rank of the islanders. In like manner, the architecture of this city is not dissimilar to the cities that he has encountered in his travels. Dissimilar, however, is the behavior of the indigenous inhabitants. While the sailors and officer walk to the Strangers' House at six in the morning, the street is flanked with locals. It is important to remember that this island is in the midst of an "utterly unknown" sea and, therefore, is unlikely subject to frequent visitors (37). The locals are so "civil" that the narrator thinks their behavior worthy of comment. Interpreting the manners of the islanders, the narrator notes that it is not so much "wonder" as "welcome" that influences the locals' behavior (41). Although the narrator explicitly does not state what is odd about the locals' behavior, one might presume it is their lack of curiosity. Unlike the reception one might expect in this situation, the sailors, far from being viewed as intruders, are accepted as guests and thus receive appropriate treatment: an orderly reception. All the while, the locals "put their arms a little abroad," which is interpreted by the narrator as a gesture of welcome. At the arrival of strangers, the locals do not exhibit the curiosity one expects, or that the reader may experience in this situation.

The Strangers' House

Two defining features of the Strangers' House are mentioned by the narrator: first, the bricks; and second, the windows. Spaciously constructed "of brick, of somewhat bluer colour than our brick" (41),[1] and interspersed with glass and cambric windows, the Stranger' House is described by the narrator as "fair." One might assume, then, that the House, like the city itself and the street through which the sailors have walked, is neither ostentatious nor gaudy. Upon entering the building, the sailors are led to a parlour, and the technical details of their stay are arranged. Two questions are asked by the officer: "What number of persons [they a]re? And how many sick" (42)? In the interests of efficiency, these technical details ought to have been asked earlier. Had the particulars been prearranged and organized, the islanders might have known, by this time, how many men they are to accommodate in the House, and the sailors might have come ashore together. Moreover, the sick sailors then might have received medical attention sooner. Why are the preparations being made now? Are these six men being observed or tested, yet again? In response, the sailors inform the officer that the crew is "one and fifty persons, whereof [the] sick [a]re seventeen."[2] Having granted the right of landing to these mariners without being aware of the number of healthy and ill they are to accommodate, the islanders, seemingly unconcerned with either the size of the crew or the severity of the infection, appear willing to lodge any number of men. Thus, the purpose of the envoy remains suspect.

For "about an hour" the sailors are left alone (42). Although the explicit reasons for the officer's departure remain unstated, one may presume that he is making the necessary arrangements. A description of how this time is spent by the sailors is conspicuous by its absence—particularly given the elaborate details which are relayed by the narrator. With the officer's return, a tour of the lodgings begins. Fifteen rooms are of dual capacity, while four are reserved for the "principal men." Why four rooms have been set aside is not clear.[3] These rooms do not resemble cells; this House does not seem to be either a monastery or a prison. Rather, the rooms are "handsome," "cheerful," and "furnished civilly." Additional provisions are made for the ill: seventeen "neat," well-lit cells are partitioned for the infirm, who, upon recovering, are to be removed to chambers similar to those previously mentioned. Based on the tour of the House, it is evident that its capacity far exceeds the needs of these mariners.

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[1] By making explicit mention of the blue bricks, the narrator seems to be pointing to another city known for its blue bricks: Babylon.

[2] White elaborates upon the Pythagorean significance of the number seventeen. White 191-92.

Once the inspection concludes, the sailors and the officer return to the parlour. Since the accommodations are acceptable to the envoys, the stipulations of their stay are delineated. Raising "his cane a little, (as they do when they give a charge or command)" (42), the officer informs the sailors of "the custom of this land:" following "this day and to-morrow, (which [are] give[n] you for removing of your people from your ship), you are to keep within doors for three days." Aware that their guests might interpret the imposed three-day seclusion as a diplomatic imprisonment, the official attempts to assuage any potential discomfort. He quickly assures the sailors that they are not being "restrained," and thus need "not [be] trouble[d]." Explaining what the sailors might perceive as a harmful situation, the officer proposes that this imposed isolation is intended for their "rest and ease." Anticipating the needs of the sailors while they are sequestered, and desiring that they lack nothing, the islanders designate six local attendants. Ostensibly, the attendants are provided "for any business [the sailors] may have abroad." The officer's precise interpretation of abroad is unclear: abroad can mean business the sailors may have beyond the island, or abroad can mean business the sailors may have beyond the Strangers' House. In either case, the sailors again proffer thanks upon the officer, emphasizing the divinity of the island: "We gave him thanks with all affection and respect, and said, 'God is surely manifested in this land'" (43). Despite having been educated earlier by the notary, the sailors overlook the islanders' custom of not being "twice paid" (41) and, for the third time, offer a reward. Declining the gift, as in the previous cases, the officer departs, and the sailors are left alone.

Although the sailors do not question the terms of their stay, the reader has the opportunity to pause and consider the events that have transpired thus far. Given their ordeal at sea, the sailors may be in need of rest. Yet, a mandatory restriction on movement seems to be of more benefit to the islanders than to the sailors: this sequestering provides an opportunity for the islanders to observe the sailors, and perhaps even for the officials to prepare their citizenry for their guests. Furthermore, it also allows the islanders an opportunity to inspect the sailors' ship, knowing it will remain unoccupied for three days. Moreover, given that the sailors have arrived unintentionally on this unknown island and their needs, to the extent that mercy requires, have been guaranteed by the local inhabitants, what type of business can they possibly have with the rest of the islanders? Closely examined, the precise mandate of these six attendants remains unclear. Further, whether or not these attendants are capable of providing medical attention to the sick is also unstated. There are, however, two additional functions of the attendants, both of which are as plausible as the officer's explanation: to prohibit the spread of illness, and to observe the sailors.

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[3] At this point in the *New Atlantis*, the ship's hierarchy has not been delineated. Only three men have been identified as unique: the sailor who "present[s] himself somewhat afore the rest" and is recognized by the islanders as the sailors' "foremost man" (38); the sailors' "principal man…save one," who converses with the reverend man (40); and the narrator. Perhaps the fourth room has been reserved for the captain.

Having been at sea for such an extended period and having spent the day preparing for the general landing, the six sailors who have been at the Strangers' House are finally fed. Feasting on "viands, both for bread and meat" (43), and drinking three types of beverages, the narrator remarks on the quality of the meal: the food is "better than any collegiate diet I have known in Europe." To this point, little is known about the narrator. In relation to the food, the narrator provides the first intimate detail about himself. The narrator's use of "I" in this statement reveals his familiarity with Europe, collegiate diets, and thus his university education.

In addition to providing food, shelter, and attendants, the islanders also offer the sailors two medicinal additives for their sick: one is natural, while the other appears artificial. First, a "great store of th[e] scarlet oranges [are provided] for [the] sick" (43), thereby adding credence to the narrator's earlier suspicion that these oranges—the same type of orange that the notary previously has brought aboard the vessel—are "used…(as it seemeth) for a preservative against infection" (41). These oranges are not only preventative, but also curative: an "assured remedy for sickness taken at sea." Second, the sailors are given a "box of small grey or whitish pills" for their sick (43). Guaranteed by the islanders, these pills are intended to "hasten…recovery." Maintaining a healthy skepticism regarding the nature of these panaceas, the narrator twice states, in parenthetical comments, that the islanders claim—that "they said"—the pills and the oranges are certain to aid the sick. With the tour of the House completed and dinner consumed, it is unclear from the narrator's account where the envoy spends the night: do these six sailors return to the ship, or do they remain in the Strangers' House?

i. Considerations on the Strangers' House

A number of conclusions may be drawn from the day the sailors have spent at the Strangers' House. First, two important details about the crew have been revealed: their size, that of fifty-one men; and the severity of their illness, as exactly one third of the men, that being seventeen sailors, are in poor health. In addition, a possible diagnosis of the sailors' sickness may be made. "Sickness taken at sea" may be a euphemism for scurvy which, although not contagious, is a common nautical ailment stemming from a lack of fresh fruits and vegetables (43).[4] Based on the sailors' lack of victuals and extended sailing, scurvy is not an implausible diagnosis of their illness. Moreover, as a preventative and curative for scurvy, oranges are a reliable source of vitamin C.

Turning to the islanders, one can conclude that although they provide all those things "which belongeth to mercy" (39), they do not seem willing to compromise their own citizenry to such an end. Thus, permitting the sailors to come ashore does not entail allowing them free reign of the island. As a result of the islanders' apparent concern for both their own people and the mariners, the internment in the House indeed may be understood as a benefit to both the sailors—"for their rest and ease" (42)—and the indigenous people—for their security. The future manner in which the islanders intend to deal with the sailors remains to be seen. Any ominous predications about the Strangers' House seem, at this point, unwarranted. Since the sailors have been permitted to land, the *New Atlantis* has become an opportunity for political research. As such, it is incumbent on the reader to consider both the sailors and the islanders, and the relationship between the two peoples. What initially appears to be a nautical adventure story, one both fictional and fantastic, has become a presentation of a heretofore unknown regime.

The Narrator's Speech

On the following day, having removed their company and goods from the ship, the sailors assemble. The catalyst for this gathering is the narrator: he "thought good to call [the] company together" (43). By initiating this meeting, the narrator now makes explicit that which has been previously implicit: he is a unique member of the crew. Since his rank remains unidentified, the reader is left to puzzle over the character of the narrator and his specific relationship to the other mariners.[5] Despite previous opportunities for disclosure, this is the first speech which serves as conversation amongst the sailors that the narrator chooses to relate. In considering the narrator's speech, it is essential to take note of the relevant insight he reveals: the sailors may be under observation, as the islanders "may withal have an eye upon" them (44). If the sailors are being scrutinized, and if the narrator is aware of this possibility, one can no longer assume his audience is solely the sailors. Furthermore, in choosing to relay his speech to his readers, the narrator is speaking not only to the sailors, but also to readers of the *New Atlantis*. Thus, the narrator's speech seems to be directed at three distinct audiences: his fellow sailors, the islanders who may be watching, and also his readers.

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[4] On the possible diagnosis of scurvy, I follow Innes 9.

[5] White suggests that the narrator may be a chaplain. White 144.

i. Friendship

Once the sailors are assembled, the narrator begins with an exhortation to his friends. For the purposes of this speech, the narrator does not refer to his fellow sailors as associates, acquaintances, colleagues, or crewmates, but as his "dear friends" (43).[6] In his essay "Of Friendship," Bacon expounds on his understanding of friendship. Although a lengthy examination of the essay is not necessary here, a number of relevant points are worthy of consideration. Throughout the essay, Bacon emphasizes the role of a friend as counsel. As a result of his external and privileged insight, a friend is able to provide one with advice: "And certain it is that the light that a man receiveth by counsel from another is drier and purer than that which cometh from his own understanding and judgment; which is infused and drenched in his actions and customs."[7] Drawing from this understanding of friendship, Bacon argues that "the best receipt (best, I say, to work, and to take) is the admonition of a friend."[8] Thus, in choosing to address his speech to his friends, Bacon's narrator explicitly identifies the relationship between himself and the crew. Clearly, there is a demarcation between the sailors and the islanders. This distinction is further reinforced by the narrator's call for friendship. By creating a division between the sailors and the islanders, the narrator is able to forge camaraderie of spirit and manner amongst the sailors, thereby establishing a forum in which he can give advice.

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[6] The importance of creating unity amongst a group of people is evident throughout our literary tradition. Exhortations to friendship are a common rhetorical method of establishing cohesion within a group. While there are countless examples of calls to friendship, one ancient and one modern example suffice. First, upon departing from Troy, Aeneas calls the surviving Trojans together and informs them of the difficulties ahead: "By this and a by a simple speech Aeneas / Comforted his people: / 'Friends and companions, / Have we not known hard hours before this? / My men, who have endured still greater dangers, / God will grant us an end to these as well. / You sailed by Scylla's rage, her booming crags, / You saw the Cyclops' boulder. Now call back / Your courage, and have done with fear and sorrow. / Some day, perhaps, remembering even this / Will be a pleasure.'" Virgil, *The Aeneid*, trans. Robert Fitzgerald 2nd ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 1985) I.268-278. The second example is found in Shakespeare; following Caesar's death, Mark Antony attempts to rouse the Roman people to remain loyal to their deceased leader: "Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears." William Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, ed. David Daniell (London: The Arden Shakespeare, 2000) III.ii.74.

[7] Bacon, *Essays* "Of Friendship" 71.

[8] Ibid. 72.

From the outset of his speech, the narrator is encouraging like-mindedness amongst the sailors. Regardless of the relationships between the sailors whilst at sea, on this island they seem to be treated and judged as a cohesive unit by the islanders. Thus, the purpose of the narrator's appeal to his "dear friends" (43) is twofold: first, as discussed, there is the obvious and common benefit in encouraging the political cohesion of the sailors; and second, it clarifies the relationship between the sailors for the benefit of their hosts. From the latter perspective, the narrator seems to establish parameters for the islanders. By presenting a unified political front, the sailors become a single political entity. As such, the sailors must then be treated with diplomatic respect and consistency. In short, what initially appears to be a formal introduction is, in fact, a politically salient means of reinforcing the relationship among the sailors, while simultaneously demarcating the relationship between the sailors and the islanders.

ii. Know Thyself

Having defined the relationship between himself and the sailors, the narrator begins to advise his friends. At the heart of his exhortation is the sailors' need for self-knowledge: "let us know ourselves, and how it standeth with us" (43). Although not a direct quotation, the narrator seems to be evoking the Delphic wisdom: "Know thyself." Inscribed in the entrance of the Delphic temple is Apollo's prescriptive advice, which serves as the point from which all inquiry begins: investigation necessarily begins with one's self. This maxim holds especially true in coming to know human things—particularly political things. If one remains ignorant about oneself, one also remains ignorant about one's political situation. If one lacks self-understanding, how is one accurately able to comprehend the actions of others?[9] The explicit call by the narrator, to know "how it standeth with [themselves]," highlights the importance of understanding the political situation in which these sailors find themselves. In their specific case, the sailors are in an "utterly unknown" part of the South Sea (37) which is inhabited by an utterly unknown people. This inquiry into the politics of the island—the people, the organization, and the sailors' position in relation to both the locals and the local organization—starts with each individual sailor. The narrator, here, implores these men, and all readers, to use their reason rather than their instinct in order carefully to consider themselves and, with equal care, carefully to consider the situation in which they, and vicariously we, are participants.

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[9] In *The Advancement of Learning,* Bacon elaborates his understanding of the Delphic knowledge in relation to "human philosophy or humanity." As such, knowing oneself is essential to understanding humanity. Bacon, *Advancement* II.ix.1. Bacon's interpretation of the Delphic oracle is derived from Plato. In the *Republic,* Plato elaborates upon the process by which a man begins coming to know other men: it is by "taking his bearings from the patterns within himself." Plato, *Republic* 409b. Bacon combines the Delphic wisdom and the Protagorian notion "that the sense of man is the measure of things." Francis Bacon, *The New Organon* ed. Fulton H. Anderson (New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1960) I.xli. In amending Protagoras' original statement, by adding "the sense of," Bacon is suggestion that human perception should not be the measure of all things. According to Bacon, the notion that man is the measure of all things, wherein man is understood as an idea (form) of man rather than as an individual man, is a "false assertion." Ibid.. Yet, if the patterns by which one judges are true, there would seem to be no other way for a man to assess the nature of other men except in relation to himself. Thus, properly understood, "Man is like the Center of the World, as far as final causes." Bacon, *Wisdom* "Prometheus" 94. From this vantage point, then, man is a microcosm of the universe; "because it is most true that of all things which are completed in the universe, Man is the thing most composite and decomposite, so that not undeservedly was he called by the Ancients *Little World.*" Ibid. 95. It is through the understanding of one's own soul that one is able to determine the regularity, or perhaps irregularity, in the soul of another man.

iii. Jonah

Perhaps unsure of the sailors' abilities to know themselves and their situation, the narrator provides a comparative biblical example from which to begin this intellectual exploration. Comparing them to Jonas—an alternate spelling for the biblical Jonah—the crewmen "are men cast on land, as Jonas was out of the whale's belly" (43). This example raises two pertinent questions: first, why is Jonah inside the whale, and for what reason is he cast upon land? And second, what is the relationship between Jonah and these sailors? To answer both questions, one must turn to the Old Testament Book of Jonah.

First, why is Jonah consumed by the whale? Prior to being swallowed, Jonah receives a call from God to "cry against" Nineveh, the ancient capital of Assyria.[10] Unwilling to foretell the destruction of the city, Jonah spurns the prophetic call and attempts to flee God. Bolstered by his hubristic belief that he can escape God, Jonah gains a berth on a ship sailing for Tarshish. A "mighty tempest" threatens both Jonah and those men with whom he sails. In order to quell the raging winds, each sailor appeals to his own God for respite. With their prayers for relief unanswered, they draw lots: "the lot f[a]ll[s] upon Jonah," and his liability is revealed. Jonah offers himself as a sacrifice: "Take me up and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm." Despite Jonah's willingness to sacrifice himself, the sailors attempt to row ashore, hoping to assure the physical salvation of both themselves and Jonah. They are, however, unable to escape the divine wrath. Desperate for their own survival, they throw Jonah overboard, and "the sea cease[s] from her raging." Jonah, however, does not drown. Instead, the "Lord ha[s] prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah is in the belly of the fish three days and three nights." While inside the whale, Jonah prays for salvation. His prayers are heard, for "the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry *land*."

Once Jonah is on shore, he must complete the task that God originally has set before him: in forty days, Nineveh is to be destroyed as punishment for her transgressions. Attempting to placate God and reverse the prophecy, the King of Nineveh institutes a period of mourning and fasting for the city. As a result, God chooses to forego the destruction of the city; although God's mercy has spared an entire city, Jonah becomes "greatly displeased and…angry." From Jonah's perspective, he has followed God's wishes, yet God has chosen to save the city, a decision that verifies Jonah's initial response to God's command: Jonah claims he has known that God is "gracious...and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness." In response to God's decision not to destroy the city, Jonah walks to the east and awaits the destruction of Nineveh. As the sun beats down upon an enraged Jonah, God mercifully provides a growing vine, and thus shade. The following morning at dawn, God sends a worm which consumes the divinely proffered vine, thereby exposing Jonah to the scorching sun. Jonah is infuriated, so much so "that he wishe[s] himself to die."

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[10] Unless otherwise indicated, all biblical references in this section are found in the Book of Jonah.

What is the relationship between Jonah and these sailors?[11] To begin, there are a number of numerological similarities between Jonah's experiences and those of these sailors. First (although occurring later chronologically), once Jonah has preached at Nineveh, God provides a forty-day moratorium on the destruction of the city. Since the people of Nineveh have behaved appropriately during this period, they are saved. In this respect, the sailors are more similar to the men against whom Jonah has preached, the people of Nineveh, than to Jonah. The islanders' injunction against shedding blood for the forty days prior to arriving in port is a test. Whereas the people of Nineveh are aware of their impending destruction and thus of the necessity for good behavior, only retrospectively is the importance of not having shed blood made known to the sailors. More notably, Jonah's ingestion by the whale lasts three days. Bacon's sailors have experienced a number of three-day periods: the amount of time that lapses between the sailors' prayer for salvation and their arrival in port, the amount of time that the ship has been anchored in the harbor, and the length of their pending seclusion in the Strangers' House. Ostensibly, this internment at the Strangers' House is intended for the "rest and ease" of the sailors. It may also be a time of consideration and transition for the islanders. As God has listened to Jonah's prayers, the islanders may be watching and listening to the sailors. The futures of these sailors are as yet undetermined, despite their being saved from death at sea, as Jonah was saved by the whale.

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[11] In answer to this question, Paterson avers, "Jonah has been cast upon land so that he might finally obey God's order to preach in Ninevah....We shall see that in saving the ship, the regime of Bensalem also was thinking how they might find Europeans open to being converted into partisans and propagandists of Bensalem; Bensalem replaces God as a deliverer from death who claims and receives loyal obedience in return for that deliverance." While Paterson's point may be correct, this relationship between Bacon's sailors and Jonah only becomes evident at the conclusion of the *New Atlantis*. Paterson, "Baconian Science" 109. An alternate response is provided by Weinberger who posits that Bacon's use of Jonah, like his previous use of Psalm 107, "suggests that Bensalem offers a grace that surpasses the power of divine grace to save or preserve body and soul." Weinberger, "Science and Rule" 874. Also see chapter one of this thesis, footnote 7.

Unclear from the narrator's comparison is where exactly one is to begin drawing parallels between Jonah and these sailors. Immediately striking is the amount of detail in the biblical account of Jonah and the lack of detail concerning the sailors in the *New Atlantis*. Jonah is "running away from the Lord." In fact, Jonah, in answering the questions of his shipmates, reveals significant details about his own life: "What do you do? Where do you come from? What is your country? From what people are you?" While Jonah is forthcoming with his answers, Bacon's narrator is not obliging with equivalent information. By making mention of the biblical Jonah, Bacon's narrator is reminding the reader how little he has divulged about the lives and characters of these sailors. In this way, any reader of the *New Atlantis* is put in the position of those men who are aboard Jonah's escape vessel: we do not know what Bacon's sailors do, their country of origin, or from what people they come. All we know for certain is the country of their most recent departure, Peru. These unanswered questions, far from providing insights, raise more questions: from what, if anything, are these contemporary Jonahs fleeing? How, if at all, have these sailors transgressed, and have they defied divine will?

Another prominent feature of comparison between the account of Jonah and the experience of these sailors is the time of seclusion. Although the chronological significance of the three-day isolation has been discussed in this thesis, an important question has not been mentioned: when are Bacon's mariners cast upon land? Based on the narrator's account, these sailors "are men cast on land" (43). At issue, however, is precisely when they are deemed ashore: is it the moment they are allowed to land, or is it when they are allowed to leave the Strangers' House? If the former is true, these men, like Jonah, have been freed when they have come ashore. In this case, the three days of seclusion have already been completed by the sailors: the first day, in which they pray to God; the second day, when they see thick clouds; and the third day, when they come into the port of the island. Following this argument, on the fourth day, they are permitted to come ashore. However, if the latter possibility is true, these men, now in the Strangers' House, are at the moment as if inside the bowels of the whale. If one draws out the comparison between Jonah and Bacon's sailors, the parallel seems to follow thus: Jonah's incarceration inside the whale is parallel to the original three-day interval, wherein the sailors pray for salvation and then come to the port; now that Bacon's sailors, like Jonah, have been vomited ashore, they are en route to Nineveh.

Fleshing out the implications of the narrator's comparison, the reader hastily may conclude that once saved from the bowels of the whale, Jonah is free from danger. On the contrary, Jonah's trials worsen once he is on land. Whereas Jonah's incarceration is the result of ignorance, Jonah's trials at Nineveh are the result of his anger and lack of compassion. With this in mind, one is left to consider what the narrator believes may befall the crew on land. At this point in the *New Atlantis*, the future of the sailors remains unknown, as do the trials which they are to undergo.

iv. Purgatory

As suggested by the biblical parallel to Jonah, these sailors, although temporarily safe, have yet to be truly saved. The narrator provides a rather chilling account of their situation: they are "between life and death;" they are "beyond both the old world and the new;" and despite being delivered in the past, there is "danger present and to come" (43). These sailors have entered into the unknown and find themselves in the abyss—they are in proverbial purgatory: they are neither alive nor dead, here nor there, safe nor unsafe. Despite the temporary respite provided by the islanders, the narrator knows that they are not yet safe and warns the sailors of this fact. According to the narrator, "It is a kind of miracle hath brought [them] hither; and it must be little less shall bring [them] hence." It is a wonder, according to the narrator, that they have arrived on the island,[12] and no less than a corresponding miracle is required to bring them forth.

The sailors are at the mercy of God and these islanders, who appear to be a "Christian people, full of piety and humanity" (43). The nature of the islanders' piety remains to be seen. In light of the apparent Christianity of the islanders, the narrator makes mention of God four times in the course of his speech: "*God* only knoweth" if they "shall see Europe" again;[13] they must "look up to *God*, and every man reform his own ways; and "therefore for *God's* love, and as we love the weal of our souls and bodies, let us so behave ourselves as we may be at peace with *God*, and may find grace in the eyes of this people."[14] Given the "piety and humanity" of these people, the narrator seems to conflate the love of God and "be[ing] at peace with God" with the possibility of gaining "grace in the eyes of this people." The narrator believes that the sailors, through a display of their own piety and humanity, can find favor with the islanders.

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[12] The next reference to "miracles" in the text is in the context of the conversion of the island. In that context, miraculous events are associated with divine intervention. However, as later uses prove, miracles of God must be contrasted with miracles made by men.

[13] Based on the narrator's desire to see Europe and his earlier comments about the collegiate diet, it is fair to assume that the narrator is European; the rest of the crew, however, are of unknown origin.

[14] The emphasis is my own.

To garner this coveted goodwill, each sailor—who, if not previously, has now begun to understand himself and his situation—must "reform his own ways" (43). Importantly, the narrator draws the reader's attention to the previous, perhaps less than wholesome, behavior of the sailors; these past indiscretions elucidate an aspect of the sailors' characters, without being explicit. As long as they are upon this island, the narrator advises, the sailors must "not show [their] vices or unworthiness." From the perspective of the narrator, the sailors are responsible not only to themselves to reform their own ways, but, similar to Jonah's companions, now they are responsible also to each other; thus, they must "not bring…confusion of face upon [them]selves." The purpose of this self-reformation is twofold: first, each sailor must reform his own ways for himself, ensuring the good of his own soul; and second, each sailor must reform his own ways for the good of his fellow sailors, ensuring that his bad behavior does not reflect poorly on his fellow crewmates. As an isolated political unit seeking clemency from an unknown and potentially hostile regime, the sailors must present a united and inoffensive front.

v. The Conditions of their Stay

Having appealed to their sense of personal well-being and communal responsibility, the narrator presents an additional and extremely compelling reason for good behavior. It is only now that he informs all the sailors of the stipulations of their stay. As required by "the custom of the land" (42), the sailors are to be detained in the Strangers' House for a period of three days. Whereas the sailors do not question their seclusion, the reader can consider the three-day isolation. As in the case of the forty-day injunction against shedding blood, the three-day seclusion has a number of biblical precedents, the most striking of which is the resurrection of Christ. In both the biblical example and the case of the sailors, the three-day period can be understood as a time of adversity resulting in spiritual rebirth. This "commandment (though in form of courtesy)" may serve as a test of the worth of the sailors (43). The narrator perceives two possible outcomes: "if [the islanders] find [their manners] bad, to banish us straightways; if good, to give us further time" (44). There is also an unmentioned third possibility: death. If the "manners and conditions" of the sailors are considered impious and inhuman, in lieu of exile, they may be executed. This third, more sinister outcome tacitly recalls the earlier words of the narrator: they are "between life and death" (43).

The narrator concludes his speech with love—the first two of seven uses in the text. In appealing for "God's love, and [as they] love the weal of [their] souls and bodies," the narrator seems to be couching impiety in terms of piety (44). At first glance, the primary reason for good behavior is the apparent desire for divine love. On more careful consideration, the narrator's emphasis is on the love of one's self, especially the love of the weal of one's soul and one's body. The love of God seems to be a means of saving that which one most loves, oneself.

If the narrator's intention is to create unity amongst the sailors, he is successful. In a single voice, the sailors thank the narrator and "promis[e ...] to live soberly and civilly" (44). Past transgressions and possible rivalries are pledged to remain in the past while the sailors work together to gain the favor of their hosts. Now officially united in intention and understanding, the sailors, perhaps compelled by the narrator's reference to the Delphic wisdom, recall the second aspect of the inscription: nothing in excess. Thus tempered and united, the sailors, these "dear friends" (43), await their fate.

The Three-Day Seclusion

After the narrator's speech, the reader is privy neither to further conversations amongst the sailors, nor to any details of the manner in which they pass their time during their three-day seclusion. Encouraged by the officer who previously leads them on the tour of the Strangers' House, the sailors spend their three days in "rest and ease" (42). These three days are spent "joyfully and without care, in expectation [of] what w[ill] be done with [them] when they [a]re expired" (44). The narrator's statement appears to hold an internal contradiction; if the sailors do not have a care, then they are not expectant of that which is to follow. By including this apparently contradictory locution in his account, Bacon's narrator is pointing to the distinction between material and psychological cares. From a material perspective, the provisions of the House of Strangers leave nothing to be desired. From a psychological perspective, the purgatory in which the sailors find themselves prohibits any carelessness on their parts.[15]

Evident throughout the narrator's relation of events is the "amendment of [the] sick" (44). The rapidity with which the ill heal is nothing short of divine: the sailors have been "cast into some divine pool of healing." It is reasonable to conclude that the sailors have spent the three days joyful at the amendment of their sick, and apprehensive, at least to some extent, for the future well-being of the entire crew.

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[15] The emphasis on the material concerns is corroborated by later statements of the sailors. In considering the hospitality of the islanders, the sailors claim that it is as if "we were come into a land of angels, which did appear to us daily and prevent us with comforts, which we thought not of, much less expected" (46).

Considerations on the Strangers' House

Reflection upon the events at the Strangers' House provides insight into the islanders, the sailors, and the narrator. The last four days chronicled in the *New Atlantis* have included a number of significant events: first, the sailors have been permitted to leave their ship; second, they have, for the first time, witnessed the local inhabitants; third, they have been installed in the Strangers' House; fourth, they have been commanded to remain in the House for three days; fifth, the narrator has spoken with the sailors and related the contents of his speech; sixth, the sailors may be under observation; and last, the sick have begun to heal.

The Strangers' House lives up to its name: there is nothing foreboding about the House itself; it has amenities beyond the expectations of the sailors. However, the role of the six attendants, as the narrator reveals, prudently must be viewed as disconcerting. Since it is unlikely that the sailors have any business abroad, the attendants probably have been provided to observe the sailors. Despite the hospitality of the islanders, the sailors are far from safe. Upon this island, there seems to be no distinction between custom and law; the sailors have been ordered, albeit in a courteous manner, to remain in the House for three days. This is not a suggestion; rather, it is a command. The logical conclusion is that the sailors, while in the House, are to be observed by the attendants.

To the point at which the sailors are installed in the House, they have undergone five tests administered by the islanders: first, they have been prohibited from landing, and ordered to depart within sixteen days; second, they have had to confirm their Christianity; third, they have sworn an oath that they are neither pirates nor have shed blood in forty days; fourth, they have likely been observed—while the officer supposedly has left them alone in the Strangers' House, while the envoy ate dinner, during the crew's disembarkment, and throughout the narrator's speech; finally, they have been ordered to remain in this House for three days, under the watchful eye of these attendants. Although the islanders have shown compassion towards the sailors, they also have exerted considerable control over them. Since arriving in port, the sailors have been dependent entirely on the islanders. In turn, these islanders have encouraged these sailors to follow the islanders' advice and commands. Despite regaining their health, the sailors remain entirely at the mercy of the islanders. Although invited ashore as guests, the sailors ostensibly have been removed from their only means of escape, relinquished control of their ship to their hosts, and for all intents and purposes have been imprisoned in the Strangers' House.

Given the likelihood of observation, the behavior of the sailors is of the utmost importance. In his speech, the narrator has intimated that these sailors have not always been upright. Similar to the behavior one might expect from mariners of the period, these sailors have checkered pasts. The specifics of the "vices or unworthiness" of the sailors are not discussed (43). However, the entire crew has been made aware that, in order to survive, they must "behave [them]selves" (44). Conduct that has been condoned aboard the ship and while in other foreign ports is not acceptable here. Reformation on the part of the sailors includes sobriety, civility, and inoffensiveness.

The advice to the sailors is provided by the narrator. One may conclude, reflecting on the narrator's speech, that he is familiar with both the biblical and Greek traditions, as well as with contemporary European education; in addition, he is able to harmonize and utilize aspects of these apparently divergent traditions to his benefit. Most important, however, is the narrator's political savvy. The enigmatic man, recounting the *New Atlantis*, is politically astute, well-educated, perceptive, pragmatic, and possesses an understanding of rhetoric. Further evident from his speech is the narrator's willingness to admit that which he believes to be true: the sailors are under observation. In doing so, the narrator makes the islanders aware of the apparent transparency of their behavior. From this point forth, one must not underestimate Bacon's narrator's account, nor the often perplexing details that he relays. One must thus always keep in mind that this is the man whom Bacon has created to recount his *New Atlantis*, and it is through this narrator that Bacon is speaking to his readers.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE GOVERNOR-PRIEST

Following the three-day seclusion in the Strangers' House, the sailors are visited by an islander whom they have not yet met. This is the first visitor mentioned by the narrator since the sailors have been installed in the Strangers' House. Although the arrival of this islander is not scheduled, his appearance is expected. Having completed the three-day internment required by the conditions of their landing, now the sailors must learn their status on the island. Are they to be forced to leave? Are they to be executed? Or, if they have passed their most recent test, are they to be permitted to remain? If granted permission to stay, the sailors must be informed of the conditions of their visit.

It is clear from the timing of this visitor's arrival, as well as from his dress and manner, that he holds an authoritative position on the island. It is this man who informs the sailors of their circumstances. As we have seen, the manner in which the locals dress indicates their position in the society. Although no definitive typology of dress can be determined as yet, the visitor's apparel affirms his importance in the minds of the sailors. Like the reverend man with whom the sailors have already conversed, this visitor also wears blue robes (39). Unlike the "reverend man" whose turban is green, this new visitor wears a white turban adorned with a red cross, while "a tippet of fine linen"[1] graces his shoulders (44). Only once Bacon's narrator has commented on this new man's apparel does he consider the visitor's actions. When the sailors first disembark, the islanders, in a gesture of greeting, "put their arms a little abroad" (41); similarly, this man "d[oes] bend…a little, and put his arms abroad" when he enters the room (44). Since the narrator has already identified the intention behind this gesture, this man is greeting the sailors. Acknowledging their compliance, the sailors somberly "salute him in a very lowly and submissive manner." Based on this local's dress and behavior, the sailors presume this visitor is to pass judgment regarding their status on the island: "from him [they] should receive sentence of life or death."

At the suggestion of the islander, only a "few" sailors are permitted to hear him speak (44). This type of behavior—namely, not communicating with the group as a whole—has been exhibited by the islanders during their previous interaction with the sailors: when the officer presents the scroll, he does not read it aloud to the entire crew (39); when the sailors are first taken to the Strangers' House, only "some few" are permitted to disembark (41); and when the officer informs the sailors of their mandatory seclusion, he tells only the six sailors who have been selected to see the House (42). Although the islanders have frequently chosen to deal with the crew in small groups, this is not a strict policy. Not all information has been revealed only to one or more distinguished members of the crew: for example, when the reverend man questions the second foremost man, the entire crew can hear them and are thus aware that if the questions are answered correctly, they "may have licence to come on land" (40); when the reverend man's attendant proffers the apology, it is offered to all of the sailors; and when the notary administers the second oath to the entire crew, they are all informed that they are to be taken to the Strangers' House the following morning (41). In the present instance, this visitor chooses to speak with a "few" distinguished members of the crew (44). Since the outcome of this communication affects all of the men, the content of the conversation between this visitor and the mariners who are permitted to remain, indubitably is to be relayed later to the entire crew. There are two primary explanations for the islander's behavior: first, he is attempting to maintain a hierarchy among the crew, thereby suggesting that he believes there is a chain of command amongst the sailors; or second, he is attempting to ensure that he speaks only to those sailors who care to listen, and who are worthy of listening.

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[1] According to Jewish Law, orthodox Jewish men must always wear tzitzit, a fringed garment. According to the Book of Numbers, God orders the Israelites to "make them fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations...that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them." Numbers 15:38-39. These fringed garments come in two forms: first, there are small ones which are worn daily beneath one's clothes; second, there are "large fringed *tallit*, with which to enfold [one]self while praying, and [one] should take care that the *tallit* be handsome." Ganzfried I.9:1.

In either case, the islander downplays the gravity of this interaction. In proposing the conversation, he states that he wishes to "speak" with the sailors (44). Given the warnings issued by the narrator in his speech to his fellow crewmen, it is unlikely that the sailors anticipate a conversation. More likely, the sailors expect to be informed of their status on the island: whether they are to be executed, permitted to remain, or must set sail.

The First Conversation: The Islanders' Verdict

Six sailors, the same number who first view the Strangers' House, choose to remain; however, with the exception of the narrator, these may not be the same men. At the outset of the conversation, the islander makes the first formal introduction in the text. Thus far, no man has introduced himself—not the officer who both delivers the scroll and leads them to the Strangers' House, the servant who receives the sailors' answer, the reverend man of place who remains in his boat, the attendant who speaks on the reverend man's behalf, the notary who administers the sailors' oaths, nor any of the sailors. According to the visiting official, he is "by office governor of this House of Strangers, and by vocation…a Christian priest" (44). It is strange that throughout the three days in which the sailors have been dwelling in the Strangers' House, the governor of the House—their official host—has not yet introduced himself. In doing so now, the governor-priest reveals both his office and his vocation, but not his name.

Ambiguity surrounds the relationship between the governor-priest's position as governor of the Strangers' House and his role as a Christian priest.[2] To this point, despite allusions to the Christianity of the islanders—suggested by the cross on the scroll (30) and the oath of Christianity (40)—there has been no indication that the House itself maintains any religious affiliations. Having identified themselves as Christians, in response to the first question in their oath, the sailors have made their own beliefs known. In his role as governor, this man offers the sailors his "service[s], both as strangers and chiefly as Christians" (44). Christianity, although apparently not a necessary requisite to receiving the benefits of the House, is an advantage. At this point, one might ask if a rabbi and imam are also on staff; were the sailors to have declared an alternate religious affiliation, might they have received the services of a different governor, chiefly as Jews or Muslims?

Once he has introduced himself, the governor-priest begins a speech which pertains to both the fate of the sailors and the nature of the island. Placing his disclaimer in the negative, the governor-priest posits that there are "some things" he may tell that the sailors "will not be unwilling to hear" (44). Of note, the governor-priest's circumlocution suggests that the sailors may be willing to hear some of the things that he may tell, while unwilling to hear other things that he may also tell. Although not mentioned by the governor-priest, in addition to the bifurcation between willingly and unwillingly received speeches, there is a second bifurcation: those things willingly and unwillingly revealed. Thus, the governor-priest's statement can be understood in four ways: first, there are things he may say that the sailors are willing to hear; second, there are things he may say that the sailors are unwilling to hear; third, there are things he may not say that the sailors are willing to hear; and last, there are things he may not say that the sailors are unwilling to hear. By beginning his speech with a brief lesson in rhetoric, the governor-priest informs the six sailors who are present—and, by extension, readers of the *New Atlantis*—that he has tailored this speech to his audience and to the situation.[3]

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[2] Considering the governor-priest, Paterson postulates, "It is possible that the distinction between 'office' and 'vocation' is meant to suggests that Bensalem does not have an established church." Paterson, "Baconian Science" 112. Or more likely, there is a unity of church and state on the island.

[3] As elucidated in *Of the Wisdom of the Ancients* through the fable of Cassandra, in order to craft a speech, one must take into account a number of factors: first, the times—one must be able to use appropriate rhetoric for a given situation; second, the content of the speech; and third, the context of the speech. It is only when these three factors are harmonized that one's words may be believed, despite the truth or possible falsity of the matter which one is disclosing. Bacon, *Wisdom* "Cassandra, or Outspokenness" 13-14.

Having spent three days in expectant seclusion, the sailors' suspense is finally alleviated. They have passed their most recent test: the state has "given [them] licence to stay on land for the space of six weeks" (44). As in the original allotment of time—the sixteen days during which the sailors are permitted to remain in port (38)—the governor-priest emphasizes the negotiability of the duration of their stay. The sailors ought not be troubled by the forty-two-day period presently proposed, as later they may choose to solicit additional time. As confirmation of this flexibility, the governor-priest provides two pieces of evidence: first, "the law in this point is not precise" (45); and second, he "do[es] not doubt [that he] shall be able to obtain…such further time." The governor-priest's two-fold statement raises two corresponding points of interest: the first pertains to the imprecision of the law; the second pertains to the governor-priest's understanding of his position vis-à-vis the state. Regarding the first point, it is unclear whether the governor-priest has been authorized to mention the possibility of an increase in length of stay, or whether he has chosen to inform the sailors of his own accord. In either case, the law regarding license to stay, like the law originally permitting a sixteen-day limit, is precise in its flexibility. Strangers on the island—specifically those who have been installed in the Strangers' House and have been deemed worthy following their three-day detention there—are granted an initial stay of six weeks, after which time, based on extenuating circumstances, the initial allotment may be increased.

The second point of interest raises the issue of legitimate authority and perceived authority. While the governor-priest "do[es] not doubt" his own role as an advocate for the sailors (45), on what or whose authority this belief rests is questionable. If the state has endowed the governor-priest with this power, then it is legitimate. On the other hand, if he assumes that being an advocate for the sailors is within the scope of his power, then it is based on his perception of his position within the bureaucratic organization of the island. According to the text, it stands that the governor-priest believes he is in a position of some authority regarding matters pertaining to the sailors and thus has some power in matters of their stay. The sailors have no reason to doubt the governor-priest's conclusion: given that the governor-priest is in charge of the Strangers' House and the sailors are currently his guests, his authority in matters that affect them, at least while they reside in the House, seems legitimate; given the authority of his office, the governor-priest is the most obvious avenue from which to gain additional time on the island. Based on this understanding, the governor-priest is in charge of the sailors so long as they remain tenants in the Strangers' House.

Although brief, the governor-priest's telling statement provides insight into both the domestic and the foreign policy of the island. The imprecision of the law allows the islanders to assess and adapt to each scenario on a case-by-case basis. When the flexibility of the duration of stay is considered in conjunction with the fixed aspects of the system—the pre-written scroll which dictates the prohibition on landing and the sixteen-day stay, the existence of the Strangers' House, the three-day seclusion, and the six-week period of initial stay—a preliminary picture emerges of a foreign policy designed to protect the island from unwanted incursions, while ensuring stipulations for providing that "which belongeth to mercy" (39). Thus far, the islanders' behavior points to a society that is neither impenetrable nor easily accessible: not everyone is granted the right to come ashore, yet some, such as these sailors, are permitted to do so. In order to maintain a foreign policy which is adaptable, a state must ensure that its bureaucrats are capable of making case-by-case assessments. As such, the domestic structure of this island must provide for the education and training of certain officers to deal with unforeseen situations.

Another interesting fact concerning the island is revealed during the governor-priest's speech: the Strangers' House has been empty for thirty-seven years. At the outset, there are two possible reasons: one, no one has sailed into the harbor during this time; or two, ships have arrived in port, but no one has been permitted to land. It is tempting to conclude that the islanders officially have not allowed anyone to land in nearly four decades. There is, however, a third possibility: one or more ships have landed, but no one has been invited to stay in the House. If this is the case, one is led to ask four questions: what has happened to other strangers who have come ashore? What distinguishes these sailors from other outsiders? Why have these sailors received this privileged invitation? And, what has changed on the island to permit the sailors to land?[4]

Regardless of the reasons that the House has been vacant for nearly four decades and these sailors are now guests, knowing that the House has been empty requires a brief reconsideration of the locals. When the six sailors are initially brought to the Strangers' House, the narrator comments on the behavior of the locals. As the sailors pass, the local inhabitants "gathered…on both sides" of the street in a calm and orderly manner (41). Four days later, both the reader and the sailors are made aware that outsiders have not been installed in the House for thirty-seven years—more than the lifetime of a considerable portion of the inhabitants. Despite the excitement one might expect when strangers arrive, the locals gather "in so civil a fashion, as if it ha[s] been not to wonder at [the sailors] but to welcome [them]" (41). Additional queries relate to the governor-priest: if the House has been unused for thirty-seven years, what is the age and experience of the governor-priest? Has he occupied this office for over thirty-seven years, awaiting the arrival of strangers? In a similar vein, if he has never met an outsider, what is the source of his expertise? His behavior, like the behavior of the locals who flank the streets, does not indicate any excitement. The prolonged vacancy of the House also raises questions related to its policy: if the Strangers' House has been in disuse for thirty-seven years, what does this indicate about the infrastructure of the island and the policies surrounding the House? It is unclear when and why the House has been built, as well as what laws mandate its use. Given the current infrequency of the House's occupancy, its purpose ensures that the island remains prepared for all chance arrivals. If this is the case, the island is in a condition of constant preparedness; the vigilance with which the islanders deal with uninvited guests—evidenced by the scroll, the oath, and the provisions for sailors—is maintained, despite the rarity of their arrival.

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[4] Although the fourth question is essential in coming to understand the text, it is premature to explore it at this point in the narration.

Consequent to its extended vacancy, the House is wealthy. As a result, "the state will defray [the sailors' costs] all the time" they stay (45). Based on the governor-priest's explanation, whether or not the House defrays the cost of strangers as a rule, or whether this is another flexible policy applied in this case to the sailors, remains unclear. Ambiguity aside, the policy of defrayal provides economic insight into the island. The governor-priest does not seem to consider money to be a limiting factor with respect to the position of the sailors. By extension, then, the sailors need not be concerned with economics, at least for the extent of their stay. In fact, the governor-priest explicitly instructs them to "take...no care" with respect to finances. In addition to covering the sailors' expenses while they are guests of the House, the islanders are willing to provide the sailors with recompense for their goods. In light of the initial contact between the two groups, the sailors have made it clear that they are willing to trade what "little store of merchandise [they have], which if it pleased th[e islanders] to deal for...might supply [the sailors] wants without being chargeable" (39). The islanders have repeatedly refused such offers. Gold, silver, and goods are all considered one by the islanders. As we have been informed, the islanders receive a "salary sufficient [from] the state" (41). Furthermore, accepting additional compensation—taking double payment for a single task—is discouraged. The islanders' repeated refusals to accept gifts from the sailors, and the extensive wealth of the Strangers' House, coupled with the islanders' offer of compensation, points to a wealthy state: first, the island must possess the means to ensure that the needs of its inhabitants are fulfilled and that the wants of the local inhabitants are not immoderately extravagant; and second, the islanders are willing to spend a considerable amount of money to ensure that the sailors remain in the Strangers' House.

To this additional financial offer, the governor-priest issues a promise of unchecked liberality: if the amenities provided by the island fail to be sufficient and if they "have any other request to make" (45), the governor-priest urges the sailors to "hide it not," for they are certain not to be displeased by the answer.[5] Since the islanders have provided for the material needs of their guests, one might wonder what else the sailors may desire: if they are indeed Christian, they may require confession, communion, or other spiritual services; they may want music, literature, or news about the rest of the world; or, as expected of sailors in port, they may crave sex. However, if the sailors ask for additional goods or services, they may appear greedy and full of vice in the eyes of the islanders. Making known the possibility of further amenities, the governor-priest again may be testing the sailors. In light of the narrator's previous warnings regarding the apparent hospitability of the islanders (43-44), despite perhaps wanting the aforementioned things, can the sailors civilly request anything additional?

The islanders' generosity is tempered by one restraint: the sailors must ask permission to venture beyond a karan from the city walls. This warning is issued by the governor-priest: "'Only this I must tell you, that none of you must go above a *karan*' (that is with them a mile and a half) 'from the walls of the city, without especial leave'" (45).[6] At this point, the reader first learns that this unnamed city is walled, a fact notably absent from the narrator's previous description. There are two possible explanations for this omission: first, the narrator does not choose to mention the walls in his original description of the city;[7] or second, the walls are not visible from the port, and thus the sailors are unaware of the bulwark. In outlining the conditions of their stay, the governor-priest emphasizes that he is required to inform them—that he "must tell"—of this prohibition. While to this point in the narration, some policies have been flexible, in this instance the law is precise. Although the restriction is clear, the punishment for venturing outside the permitted zone is not discussed, nor is the process for gaining "especial leave." Despite the restriction on the sailors' movement, their tether has been greatly increased: a mile and a half circumference around the city provides significantly more freedom than do the confines of the Strangers' House. That being said, it is important to keep in mind that the sailors are never unrestrictedly free while upon the island.

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[5] Paterson argues that it is "probably a mistake to read too much into" the governor-priest's solicitation of "any other requests." He claims that the governor-priest is expressing "a conventional enough pleasantry or expression of courtesy." Paterson, "Baconian Science" 112. Weinberger notes that this is a strange offer to make to a group of sailors who have been at sea for over a year. Weinberger, "Science and Rule" 874; Innes follows Weinberger. Innes 11.

[6] White presents possible sources for this prohibition on travel. White 137.

[7] When the city is first described as the ship enters the port, there is no mention of walls: "And after an hour and a half of sailing, we entered into a good haven, being the port of a fair city; not great indeed, but well built, and that gave a pleasant view from the sea" (38). There are two uses of a city's walls: first, to keep out foreign invaders; second, to keep in local inhabitants. In Critias' description of Ancient Athens, in the dialogue bearing his name, like the city in which the sailors are staying, Old Athens also is walled: Athens' walls are very important during the Persian War. Plato, *The Critias*, eds. Diskin Clay and Andrea Purvis, *Four Island Utopias* (Newbury: Focus Publishing, 1999) 112d.

Silenced by the governor-priest's words, the sailors "looked a while one upon another" (45). Understandably, they are astonished. Not only have they been granted the right to stay on the island, but the state intends to incur any costs and, in addition, compensate them for their goods. The only stipulation—which reasonably can be understood from the perspective of the islanders—is the prohibition on the sailors' mobility. As a result of the islanders' hospitality, the sailors are rendered temporarily speechless: they "could tell not what to say." They add, in response to the governor-priest's suggestion that they voice any additional wants, that they have nothing further to request. Conveying their gratitude, the sailors exclaim that this island is "a picture of…salvation in heaven," so much so, that they believe this island has saved them from "the jaws of death."

When their initial astonishment has subsided, the sailors, despite promising to obey the ordinance of the governor-priest, confess their "hearts [are] inflamed to tread further on this happy and holy ground" (45).[8] The words of the sailors underscore their perception of the divine nature of the island. Yet, the sailors' reaction casts a shadow of doubt on their own Christianity; to understand the island as a heaven on earth is antithetical to Christian doctrine. The sailors' association of this worldly island with heaven raises a number of religious implications: if all heavenly rewards are available on earth, what are the reasons to seek entrance into heaven? Moreover, if this island is a heaven on earth, the compulsion towards living a life dedicated to God seems less pressing. On the other hand, if this island actually has managed to create a heaven on earth, then the fundamental tension between the earthly state and the heavenly state no longer exists on this island. That being said, if this island is a heaven on earth, should these islanders be revered by the sailors as one traditionally might worship gods?

As evidence of their gratitude, the sailors, echoing Psalm 137, claim that their "tongues should first cleave to the roofs of [their] mouths, ere [they] should forget either this reverend person or this whole nation in [their] prayers" (45). Although used here by the sailors to indicate appreciation, this Psalm originally is uttered in the heat of battle. More than a war cry, this Psalm is also a song of vengeance. "By the Rivers of Babylon," the Israelites lament their capture and wonder how they can "sing the Lord's song, in a strange land."[9] As motivation to defeat their oppressors, the Israelites swear that if they forget their former home, Zion, their tongues must cleave to the roofs of their mouths. Unlike the Israelites, who vow never to abandon God or forget their divinely bestowed land, the sailors promise not to forget the land in which they currently are living—the land of their exile.

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[8] It is interesting that the sailors want to "tread further on this happy and holy ground," yet make no mention of desiring to interact with the local inhabitants.

[9] Psalm 137.

As a cleric, it is likely that the governor-priest is aware of the inconsistency in the sailors' statement. While nothing is said by Bacon's narrator about his reaction, the governor-priest does not appear to be offended. That being said, one must ask whether the sailors indeed are professing not to forget this "reverend person or this whole nation" (46), or rather their homeland, wherever that may be? It is likely the governor-priest presumes that the sailors, by drawing the parallel between themselves and the Israelites of the Psalm, are likening this island to their desired homeland: the island, not the homeland of these sailors, is the place they swear not to forget.[10]

As a result of their interaction, the governor-priest has been elevated in the sailors' eyes. The governor-priest now is called by the same epithet with which the sailors designate the man of place; both are described as reverend. These are the only two individuals thus far who have been identified in this way; the officer, the notary, and the attendant are not described as reverend. But now, the reverend man, the governor-priest, and the nation which they represent are worthy of veneration.

Concluding the initial interaction with the governor-priest, the sailors prostrate themselves, offering him both their persons and their possessions. The governor-priest declines, alternately requesting a "priest's reward" (46). It is clear that the governor-priest distinguishes between the compensation of a governor and that of a priest. Perhaps a governor deserves the possessions of the sailors, but a priest requires something different. According to the governor-priest, the priestly reward he seeks is comprised of two aspects: "brotherly love," on the part of the sailors; and "the good of [the sailors'] souls and bodies." Notably absent from this remuneration is any mention of God. The governor-priest's compensation is spiritual insofar as he is concerned with the sailors' souls, and also physical insofar as he is concerned with the material well-being of the sailors.[11]

With "tears of tenderness in his eyes," according to the narrator's interpretation, the governor-priest departs (46). Left alone, the sailors ruminate over the event that has transpired, the content of which is relayed by the narrator to the sailors who have not been present for the conversation and to the reader. Continuing the theme of heaven on earth, the entire crew asserts that "they were come into a land of angels." In considering the angelic nature of the islanders, the sailors emphasize the "comforts" they provide, rather than their piety. Anticipating the needs of the sailors, the islanders have presented them with ample amenities—even some which the sailors have not considered. The praise which the sailors bestow upon the islanders may not be without an ulterior motive: the sailors still may be under observation.

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[10] White posits that the incorporation of Psalm 137 points to the relationship between Bensalem and Jerusalem. White 137.

[11] However, by even suggesting that a reward may be received, the governor-priest appears to be accepting double-payment for his task: the salary awarded by the state and "the brotherly love" of the sailors.

The Second Conversation: The Island's Conversion

At "about ten of the clock" (46) the next morning, the governor-priest visits the sailors for a second time. Whatever may have transpired amongst the sailors that night and the following morning, is not revealed. If a conversation has occurred, which is highly likely, one might reasonably expect the content to focus on the recent visit of the governor-priest, the newly revealed conditions and benefits of the sailors' stay, as well as speculations on the nature of this curious island. Suffice it to say, Bacon's narrator chooses to relay only the discussion that occurs the following morning.

There are four obvious differences between today's meeting with the governor-priest and their previous conversation: the initial greeting, the purpose of the governor-priest's arrival, the arrangement of the room, and the number of sailors who remain. Unlike the governor-priest's first meeting with the sailors—which begins with formal gesticulations of greeting—now the governor-priest and the sailors exchange familiar salutations. It is clear that having established their relationship the previous day, they are no longer strangers; now, as acquaintances, they behave in a more cordial manner. The purpose of the last meeting, according to the governor-priest at that time, is to "speak with some few of" them (44); this time, "he has come to visit" (46). Visiting with people, as opposed to speaking with them, is less formal; the greeting suggests that this will be a less official interaction. The informality of this meeting is evidenced also by the arrangement of the room. In the previous conversation, no mention is made of the manner in which the governor-priest and the sailors are positioned. Now, the narrator paints a picture of the setting in which the governor-priest and the sailors converse: the governor-priest "call[s] for a chair," and those sailors who remain to visit "s[i]t down with him." Evidently, this conversation is considerably more leisurely than their previous one, in which the governor-priest delineates the terms of the sailors' stay. Furthermore, on this occasion, the governor-priest does not stipulate a limit on the number of sailors in attendance; "some few" (44), or all can visit if they choose: ten sailors remain, four more men than at their previous conversation.

Reflecting on the type of sailors who choose to visit with the governor-priest, the narrator makes explicit that his "dear friends" (43), those who now speak "with one voice" (44), are not all equal. When the narrator addresses the sailors upon their arrival in the Strangers' House, he identifies himself as a unique member of the crew. Now he reveals that there are additional distinctions amongst the sailors: some of the sailors are "of the meaner sort" (46). He thereby implies that some are also of the higher sort. Given the narrator's locution, these "meaner" members of the crew may form the majority, while those seamen similar in character to the narrator may form the minority. As the narrator notes, this distinction is evinced by the sailors' actions: there are those who choose to visit with the governor-priest; and of those who choose not to remain, there are those "of the meaner sort," or "those who have "gone abroad." There are thus a number of divisions amongst the sailors: first, there are those who have chosen to remain, and those who have chosen to depart; second, there those who are of a lower character, and those who are of a higher character. Amongst this latter group, there is a further distinction: those who prefer to explore, and thus come to know the island through sight; and those who prefer to converse, and thus learn about the island through speech. By emphasizing this distinction amongst men, the narrator points to a division between similar types of men: those who prefer deeds, and those who prefer speeches. Based on his behavior, the narrator is the former type of man; readers of the *New Atlantis* likely are comprised by this category as well. With an air of informality and a desire to come to know the nature of this island, those sailors who prefer speeches begin their second conversation with the governor-priest.

i. Bensalem

Until this point, both the sailors and readers of the *New Atlantis* have been unaware of the name of the island. We now learn from the governor-priest that this island is called Bensalem. In a parenthetical aside, the narrator notes, "so they call it in their language" (46). Since the specific language spoken on the island is not disclosed, the narrator thereby suggests that the language of the island has not been identified thus far in the text—it is not ancient Hebrew, ancient Greek, Latin, or Spanish. It is not unreasonable to suggest that Bensalem has an indigenous language, spoken only on the island. If this is the case, it may be difficult for the sailors to converse with some of the inhabitants; while it is evident that officials are educated in foreign languages, at least in Spanish, it is unclear whether or not the same can be said of other islanders. Although the governor-priest does not provide an etymological origin for the island's name, Bensalem, one may consider its possible Hebraic origins. Accordingly, Bensalem may be derivative of two Hebrew words: *ben*, meaning son, and *salem*, meaning peace, completeness, or safety.[12] For Bensalem, then, there are two plausible English translations: first, son of peace; or the inverted translation, peace of the son. In either case, this "utterly unknown... island" (37) has been given a name, one which reinforces the previous suspicions of the sailors regarding the divinity of the state.

ii. An Utterly Unknown Island

Next, the governor-priest offers a preliminary sketch of the history of Bensalem. He confirms that this island has "hitherto…not come to light" (37) and is unknown to the rest of the world. As the sailors learn, Bensalem is "utterly unknown" by design, which explains why neither the sailors, nor Bacon's readers, have heard of this "happy and holy ground" (45). The governor-priest is adamant that the rest of the world is unaware of Bensalem's existence; how he is capable of making this judgment is not revealed. Most shocking to the sailors, however, is not that the world is ignorance of the existence of this island, but that the Bensalemites, despite their anonymity, "know well most part of the habitable world and are [them]selves unknown" (46). At this point, one must ask how Bensalem has achieved such a curious status. One might even wonder whether or not the governor-priest's account of the condition of Bensalem is honest, or whether this is "a land of magicians" (51).

To authenticate his claims regarding the political policies of the island, the governor-priest presents three pieces of explanatory information: first, the island maintains a "solitary situation" (46); second, the island enforces "laws of secrecy…for [their] travelers" who go abroad; and third, the islanders rarely admit strangers. Each of these political practices—isolationism, domestic laws of secrecy for those who travel, and the rare admission of strangers—are worthy of further consideration.[13] The governor-priest, having uttered such a loaded statement, is well aware that he has presented an intriguing account of the political state of the island. Moreover, knowing that the sailors are curious, as revealed in their last encounter, he has clearly further piqued the sailors' interest. Getting the sailors' attention may have been the intention of the governor-priest's brief disclosure, thereby preparing the sailors for the next portion of his visit.

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[12] Weinberger, *New Atlantis* 46 fn. 68; Weinberger, "Science and Rule" 875; White, 102, 135, 144; David Spitz, "Bacon's 'New Atlantis:' A Reinterpretation," *Midwest Journal of Political Science* 4:1 (1960): 60.

[13] While the reader may desire immediate explanation of the aforementioned policies, the sailors do not immediately question the governor-priest on these topics. Relying on Bacon's narrator for an account of the island, readers of the *New Atlantis* must wait to see if these peculiar laws ever are explained.

iii. Questions and Answers

To expedite the conversation, the governor-priest proposes that the sailors question him about Bensalem. As justification, the governor-priest states that "because he that knoweth least is fittest to ask questions, it is more reason, for the entertainment of the time, that ye ask me questions, than that I ask you" (46). Establishing the framework of the conversation thus, the governor-priest acknowledges that he is more knowledgeable about Bensalemite history than are the sailors. Given the sailors' ignorance about the island, the governor-priest's knowledge is indisputable; however, this fact does not necessitate that the sailors question the governor-priest.[14] The value of questioning and answering is dependent on the quality of the questions being asked; therefore, in order to gain sufficient and satisfactory answers, one must be capable of positing appropriate questions. Effective questioning must take into account a variety of factors: the relationship between the questioner and the one being questioned; the situation in which the conversation is taking place; and finally, the type of information being solicited.

The relationship between the questioner and the one being questioned dictates the mood, establishes the degree to which the questions can be open and honest, and determines the manner in which the question is posed; for example, when one is soliciting answers from a friend—rather than from a teacher, employer, colleague, or parent—one can often be more forthcoming and less formal. In this case, the sailors are raising questions to a man whom they have identified as their superior. As mentioned, the relationship between the governor-priest and the sailors has been established already at their first meeting, during which time the sailors humble themselves before him and identify themselves as the "lowly and submissive" (44), "true servants" (46) of the governor-priest. Furthermore, the governor-priest has identified himself as their superior and has had "a parent-like aim" (45) in dealing with the sailors. As a functionary of Bensalem—one who is authorized to oversee the maintenance of the Strangers' House, and presumably all those strangers within the House—the governor-priest is in charge of the sailors. The governor-priest's position vis-à-vis the sailors is not to be underestimated: as the sailors' acknowledge, he holds the power "of life or death" in deciding their fate (44).

A consideration of this relationship, one between inferiors (the sailors) and a superior (the governor-priest), sheds light on the context in which the conversation takes place. The sailors, recently saved from "the jaws of death" (45) by these islanders, now are conversing in the

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[14] In the current scenario, it is clear that the governor-priest is more knowledgeable about the subject matter under discussion than are the sailors. However, that does not necessarily warrant that "he who knows least is fittest to ask questions." The validity of this assertion rests in the subject matter about which one is conversing: one must distinguish between the different types of knowledge one seeks, in order to determine who is the most adept questioner.

Strangers' House, an institution designed for the express purpose of housing those rare foreigners admitted to the island. Although it appears that this is a private conversation, one between the ten sailors and the governor-priest, this may not be the case. As the narrator earlier suspected, the islanders "may withal have an eye upon" (44) the sailors. Most likely, the governor-priest reports to other islanders on the "manners and conditions" of the sailors. Given the situation, whatever questions the sailors ask and the manner in which they are posed are under scrutiny. Perhaps the casual context of this conversation is intended to make the sailors comfortable so that they disclose their true natures and true intentions.

It is clear that the sailors are in a precarious position. Although any immediate danger to their lives may appear to have subsided, the sailors remain dependent on the Bensalemites, specifically on the governor-priest. Bearing this in mind, their situation is further complicated by the type of information that they are encouraged to solicit. Despite the invitation to inquire further, the extent to which such inquiry is prudent remains a matter for speculation. Prudence dictates that the sailors must proceed cautiously. Bensalem is an island that evidently guards itself: they have laws of secrecy for those who travel abroad and for those strangers who, on occasion, are admitted. Whatever questions the sailors choose to ask—and they are obliged to question the governor-priest—must be formulated in a politic fashion. If the sailors accidentally infringe on a sensitive or secretive subject, the consequences might prove dire.

Responding to the governor-priest's invitation, the sailors reiterate their lowly rank and "humbly than[k] him" (46) for the opportunity to ask questions. While one expects the sailors to ask discreet questions, the precise wording of the questions is noteworthy. According to the sailors, "there [i]s no worldly thing on earth more worthy to be known than the state of that happy land." In other words, of all the possible mundane subjects, nothing is more deserving of study than Bensalem. The ramifications of this statement are far reaching: in effect, the sailors state that of all the worldly subjects to study—including nature, science, psychology, mathematics, medicine, and philosophy—nothing is more worthy of contemplation than Bensalem. By extension, then, the study of politics, rather than the study of nature, is the most worthy intellectual pursuit. It is not, however, the study of any polity—not ancient Greece, the Roman Republic, ancient Israel, Egypt, or a modern regime—it is specifically the study of this particular island—this unique political unit.[15] Given the nature of political things, a modern reader might expect the sailors to ask about Bensalem's population density and distribution, the system of taxations and education, or government structure and bureaucratic organization. The sailors, however, do not to ask a question concerning government; rather, they pose a theological question: "who was the apostle of th[is] nation, and how it was converted to the faith" (47)?

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[15] Bacon's narrator seems to be informing his readers about the importance of all things political. If politics is the most important study, and the study of this island is the political unit most worthy of study, then this text is of supreme importance.

The knowledge that the sailors seek in answer to their question illustrates what they hold most valuable: the sailors claim that the knowledge they desire "above all" (46) is religious. Of all the questions the sailors might have asked, this one is certainly strange. Prior to inquiring into the religion of the island, however, the sailors provide a lengthy explanatory preamble that clarifies the rationale fundamental to their query. First, the sailors call attention to their foreignness; they and the Bensalemites are "met from the several ends of the world." In this statement, the sailors remind the governor-priest that they come from a distant land, one with different "manners and conditions" (44). This being said, if the question to follow is deemed inappropriate by the governor-priest, there is a valid justification for their impertinence—the sailors are strangers. Second, the sailors reaffirm their own Christianity, thereby reminding the governor-priest that, in spite of their political foreignness, they are "both parts Christians" (47). The question, therefore, is being asked by one Christian to another Christian. This relationship is further emphasized by the sailors' suggestion that they "should meet one day in the kingdom of heaven." As such, the governor-priest subtly is encouraged to view the question as being asked by both "strangers and chiefly [by] Christians" (44). By explaining themselves in this way, the sailors make it appear that their ensuing two questions are motivated by piety.

The sailors' questions are premised on the vast distance between Bensalem and Israel, as well as on the isolation of the island. In light of these two facts—how Christianity is brought across the seas, and who has converted this unknown island—puzzling issues arise in regard to Bensalemite Christianity. It is this concern which is at the heart of the sailors' first question:

> [They] desire to know (in respect that the land was so remote, and so divided by vast and unknown seas, from the land where our Saviour walked the earth,) who was the apostle of the nation, and how was it converted to the faith? (47)

The sailors' first question is composed of two parts: who is the apostle responsible for the conversion, and how was the island converted? When distilled, these two questions attempt to solicit the same information: how did this island, one which is not only distant from where Jesus has walked the earth but also solitary, ever come to follow Christianity? While the latter question may be construed as rude, the former two questions definitely are politic.

Evidently, the governor-priest is pleased by the question that the sailors have chosen to ask, as demonstrated by the narrator's assessment of his response: "It appeared in his face that he took great contentment in this…question" (47). Based on the governor-priest's physical reaction, the sailors clearly have made a prudent political decision in posing an apparently pious question, and have not encroached too far into Bensalem's laws of secrecy. According to the governor-priest, the sailors' question indicates that they "first seek the kingdom of heaven." Indeed, the sailors, by presenting such a lengthy preamble, have attempted to highlight their piety.[16] In doing so, the sailors have successfully encouraged the governor-priest to reveal details about the island.[17]

In response to the sailors' two-part question, the governor-priest inverts his answers: first, he answers their second question—"how [the island] was converted to the faith" (47); and second, he answers their first question—"who was the apostle of [this] nation." With familiarities aside, the governor-priest agrees to "gladly and briefly satisfy their demand." Brevity, however, is not the forte of the governor-priest.[18]

iv. The Miracle

The governor-priest begins his answer by explaining that Bensalem, like most states, was not converted during Jesus' public ministry, but only after Jesus' death: the island receives Christ's teachings "about twenty years after the ascension of our Saviour" (47). As such, the island's conversion results from Jesus' apostolic commission. Based on the governor-priest's description, the conversion is initiated by a grand and spectacular miracle. Witnesses to the conversion, the governor-priest notes, are the "people of Renfusa, (a city on the eastern coast of [the] island)." Renfusa is not the city in which the sailors are staying.[19] The ensuing spectacle is "so strange…[that] people of the city gathered apace together on the sands, to wonder." On a "cloudy and calm" night, "a great pillar of light" is seen a "mile into the sea." This pillar is not descending from the sky, but rather is "[r]ising from the sea…way up towards heaven." The column of light is topped by "a large cross of light, more bright and resplendent than the body of the pillar."

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[16] According to Paterson, the governor-priest's use of this biblical allusion is "a statement of considerable irony since the Biblical phrase occurs in a context where Jesus is urging men to take no thought concerning the welfare of their bodies, an attitude which is not exactly the one we have seen in the Europeans." Paterson, "Baconian Science" 116.

[17] I agree with Lampert's caution regarding the man who informs the sailors of the island's conversion: "The tale of Christian origin is told by a believer, a Christian priest; a different perspective on such origins will be provided by one who does not believe them but knows their uses." Lampert, *Nietzsche and Modern Times* 31.

[18] Evidently, nor is it mine.

[19] In explaining the events of the conversion, the governor-priest identifies a single Bensalemite city; since Renfusa is not the city in which the sailors are staying, one is encouraged to consider the political organization of the island.

Desiring a closer look, some of the Renfusans board "a number of small boats" (47) and sail towards the column. Sixty yards from the pillar, the boats become "bound." Prohibited from moving closer to the column, "the boats st[an]d all as in a theatre, beholding the light as an heavenly sign." Serendipitously, a "wise man of the society of Salomon's House" is present at the event, and he too has joined the Renfusans. This is the first mention of this "house or college" in the text (48). All that the sailors and the readers know about the House is that which is mentioned in the governor-priest's current account: Salomon's House "is the very eye of this kingdom." The wise man plays an indispensable, custodial role in the events of this conversion. Earnestly considering the spectacle from his immovable boat, the wise man prostrates himself and lifts "his hands to heaven," praying to the "Lord God of heaven and earth." As if by divine will, following the prayer, the boat of the wise man is freed, while all of the other boats remain fast. He draws near the pillar of light, alone. As he approaches the column, "the pillar and cross of light brake up, and cast itself abroad, as it were, into a firmament of many stars." Remaining in the wake of the firmament is a "small ark or chest of cedar" which, despite being submerged in the sea, is dry.

Once the ark is lifted into the wise man's boat, it "open[s] of itself" (48). Inside are a book and a letter. The book contains all of the canonical books of the Old and New Testament, "the Apocalypse itself, and some other books of the New Testament which were not at that time written" (49). The letter provides the answer to the sailors' first question. Written by Saint Bartholomew, the letter explains how and why the ark has come to arrive on the shores of the island. If the conversion were not already attended by sufficient miraculous events, there is yet an additional miracle. The "great miracle," accompanying the book and the letter, is the ability of all who are present—"Hebrews, Persians, and Indians, besides the natives"—to read the book and the letter "as if they had been written in his own language."

The governor-priest's concluding remarks emphasize the importance of the conversion for the historical development of Bensalem. He notes that, in this manner, "this land was saved from infidelity (as the remain of the old world was from water) by an ark" (49). Likening the conversion of the Renfusans to the biblical flood, the reader is encouraged to consider the similarities and differences between the Bensalemites prior to their conversion, and the antediluvian civilization. The pre-flood infidelities are of a sexual nature. Deeming the sexual practices of the time inappropriate,[20] God determines to "destroy man"[21] and thus cleanse the world of impurity. The subsequent flood has all of the attendant violence and finitude of a catastrophic event.[22] In contrast, there is no accompanying violence at the Bensalemite conversion. Further, the governor-priest provides no indication as to the specific infidelities which have condemned the islanders; one is left to speculate about their possible indiscretions. A further difference between the two events is that in the biblical Scripture records only "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord."[23] Although the wise man is surely in a privileged position, in contrast to the biblical Noah, he is not saved while all others are destroyed; in Bensalem, no one is killed. In both scenarios, the event is followed by the formation of a covenant between God and man: God promises Noah never again to destroy everything that is alive—"And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there anymore be a flood to destroy the earth;"[24] in the case of Bensalem's conversion, there is an implicit covenant—"And thus [i]s this land saved from infidelity" (49). With that, the conversation is complete. There is no further discussion, nor time for questions. The governor-priest is summoned by a messenger at the precise moment additional questions are to be entertained.

v. The Conversion Reconsidered

Unlike the sailors who have heard the account of Bensalem's conversion, Bacon's reader has the luxury of rereading and reconsidering the information that has just been revealed. Renfusa, the city in which the miracle occurs, is mentioned by name, while the city in which the sailors are staying has not been identified. Since the city where this miracle has occurred has been conspicuously identified by both the governor-priest and Bacon's narrator, the origins of the name may prove helpful in coming to understand the conversion and the Bensalemites. Renfusa is not an English word; as such, one must consider other etymological origins of the name of this auspicious city. According to Weinberger, Renfusa means *sheep-natured* or *sheep-like*: he suggests "it is a combination of the Greek word *rhen* and *phusis*."[25] Drawing from this possible etymological origin of the name of the city, the reader is encouraged to consider the people who bear witness to the event as possessing a sheep, or herd-like, nature. During the conversion, the Renfusans first quickly gather on the beach; it seems that they *all* gather on the beach, and then they *all* board boats. Although it is not made explicit in the account, one is encouraged to presume that what one Renfusan does, they all do. Men such as these, with sheep-like natures, require guidance from a higher source: these men need a shepherd.

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[20] Genesis 6:1-6; Luke 17:27.

[21] Genesis 6:7.

[22] "And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man. All in whose nostrils *was* the breath of life, of all that *was* in dry *land* died. And every substance was destroyed that was upon the face of the ground...." Ibid. 7:21-23.

[23] Ibid. 6:8.

[24] Ibid. 9:11.

From a biblical perspective, the shepherd is a recurrent image signifying the need for all people to have a guide. Jesus, according to Christian doctrine, is the one true shepherd: "I am the good shepherd, and know my *sheep*, and am known of mine."[26] At the conversion of the Renfusans, not only is a divine shepherd made known to the people, but there is a second, albeit human shepherd who enables them to interpret the event: the wise man of the House of Salomon. It is a member of the House of Salomon, rather than Jesus or one of his disciples, who intervenes on behalf of the people and brings the miracle to fruition.

Herd-like and orderly, as their name suggests, the Renfusans gather to watch the strange and marvelous sight. As they direct their attention to the East—out to sea—they behave as though they are spectators at a theatrical performance. All attention is focused on the pillar of light topped by the resplendent cross. Boarding boats, they move, like a crowd in the pit of a theatre, towards the light in order to acquire a better view of the ensuing drama: "the boats all stood as in a theatre, beholding this light as an heavenly sign" (47). Why does Bacon choose to describe the events of the conversion, an event that is so solemn, as theatrical?

One of Bacon's most known theories, the idols of the mind, includes an idol of the theatre.[27] With this implicit suggestion from Bacon, one must "gladly and briefly" (47) consider the idol of the theatre in relation to the conversion of the island. Idols of the mind, according to Bacon in the *New Organon*, are "four kinds of illusions which block men's minds:"[28] idols of the tribe, idols of the cave, idols of the marketplace, and idols of the theatre. Of the four idols, Bacon argues, the former two are innate in human beings—suggesting that they cannot be excised but can be minimized by educating a man—while the latter two are artificial—suggesting that they are of man's creation. In postulating his theory of the idols, Bacon is issuing a "warning to the human understanding."[29] Since the miraculous conversion is described as theatrical, the relationship between the idols of theatre and the events of the conversion must be briefly considered. Idols of the theatre arise "from the various dogmas of different philosophies, and even from mistaken rules of demonstration."[30] Men allow idols of the theatre to enter human understanding: "Idols of the Theatre are not innate or stealthily slipped into the understanding; they are openly introduced and accepted on the basis of fairytale theories and mistaken rules of proof."[31] If these hindrances to proper intellection are incorporated consciously into one's understanding, as are fairytales, what is the status of Bensalem's theatrical conversion? With Bacon's understanding of theatrical idols in mind, one must turn to reconsider the events of Bensalem's conversion.

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[25] Weinberger, *New Atlantis* 47 fn. 72; Weinberger, "Miracles" 107; Weinberger, "Science and Rule" 875-76; White 144, 160.

[26] Numbers 27:17; 1 Kings 22:17; 2 Chronicles 18:16; Matthew 9:36; Mark 6:34.

[27] On the importance of the idols of the theater and the theatrical nature of the miracle, I follow David Renaker, "A Miracle of Engineering: The Conversion of Bensalem in Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis*," *Studies in Philology* 87:2 (1990): 188.

[28] Bacon, *Organon* I.xxxix.

The set of this divine play, a cloudy, calm night, provides a backdrop of mystery. The moon, hidden from view, does not shed much light in the darkened sky. In stark contrast to the tranquility and darkness, a mile off shore, a "great pillar of light" (47) rises from the depths of "the sea a great way up towards heaven."[32] One cannot possibly overestimate how spectacular this sight must have been. As the light is "not sharp," it is not a fearful sight. There is no cataclysmic event accompanying the optics. If the pillar of light is not sufficient to evoke a sense of awe, "a large cross of light, more bright and resplendent than the body of the pillar," crowns the top of the pillar. Combining the pillar of light and the cross simultaneously invokes two prominent biblical images, the former from the Old Testament and the latter from the New Testament.

During the Exodus from Egypt, God frequently appears to the Israelites in cylindrical form. Scripture relates that "the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night."[33] The divine pillar is an Old Testament beacon: it sheds light on the path which the Israelites are to follow.[34] In and of itself, the pillar is a symbol of divine presence, guidance, and concern: it signifies that God is with his chosen people. The Bensalemite pillar of light, however, is further adorned with a cross. All biblical references to a cross occur in the New Testament. Following his crucifixion, the cross becomes a symbol of Jesus' sacrifice, suffering, and the subsequent salvation he offers to mankind.[35] Represented in the Renfusan pillar and cross, then, are an Old and a New Testament symbol of divinity, united in this "strange spectacle."[36]

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[29] Ibid. I.xliv.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Ibid. I.lxi.

[32] Renaker notes the significance of the pillar of light being at sea: "Of all the miracles of Christ, the ones that are not, because they cannot be, honored with any shrine are the ones performed at sea. No shrine, no pilgrimage; hence no temptation of a resident priesthood or monastic community to exploit the curiosity and credulity of pilgrims with sacred relics more or less authentic....Simply by locating his miracle one mile offshore, Bacon has obviated millennia of superstitious practices." Renaker 188.

[33] Exodus 13:21.

Overcome by the desire "to go nearer to this marvelous sight" (47), the Renfusans put themselves into boats and sail to sea. Compelled to inspect the pillar more closely, the Renfusans seems to share a natural curiosity: the islanders want to be closer to the pillar in order to inspect it more carefully. The ancient Bensalemites and the current inhabitants of the island, at least those of the city in which the sailors are staying, are different in this respect: when confronted by this anomalous sight, the ancient Bensalemites are interested in getting a closer look; when the contemporary Bensalemites are confronted by the sailors, an ostensibly anomalous sight, they are not overcome by wonder (41).[37] Regardless, the ancient Bensalemites are able to gain a superior vantage point, but unable to touch the pillar. Sixty yards from the spectacle, the boats become stuck; bound by an unknown 'force,' the boats are prevented from moving closer. The Renfusans, unable to move forward, must be content where they are, or return to shore. Surrounding the pillar, the islanders "behold this light as an heavenly sign" (47). The pillar of God and the cross of Christ are deemed signs from heaven.

The Renfusans' assessment of the pillar and cross as divine signs is fundamental to understanding this great event. Recognizing the sanctity of the ensuing event, the Renfusans prove themselves worthy spectators.[38] In order for this miracle to come to fruition and thus become all that it can become, the spectators must prove themselves worthy of interpreting the event and, therefore, worthy of receiving the event. They must believe in the divinity of the signs and accept that the miraculous event is not an illusion, but rather a sign from God. In doing so, the spectators consecrate the event and instill an air of awe in its reception.

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[34] Exodus 14:19; Nehemiah 9:12, 19.

[35] One can argue that the resplendence of the cross, as compared to the column, is indicative of the resplendence of Christianity as compared to Judaism.

[36] This is not the first example in the *New Atlantis* of the combination of an Old Testament and a New Testament symbol. The first example is evidenced on the scroll which the Bensalemites present to the sailors. Embossed on the scroll is a cherub, an Old Testament symbol, and a cross, which is a New Testament symbol (39).

[37] There are a number of ways to account for this difference: first, a divine pillar of light is more fascinating than the unexpected arrival of a group of sailors; second, something fundamental has changed in the nature of the Bensalemites.

[38] Friedrich Nietzsche, in "Richard Wagner in Bayreuth," discusses the necessary factors for an event to be great: "For an event to possess greatness two things must come together: greatness of spirit in those who accomplish it and greatness of spirit in those who experience it." Friedrich Nietzsche, "Richard Wagner in

Worthy spectators, however, may nevertheless require assistance in interpreting great events. Since the Renfusans are herd-like, they require a shepherd to guide them towards the appropriate interpretation of this miracle. Luckily, "[i]t so fell out, that there was in one of the boats one of the wise men of the society of Salomon's House" (47). Notably, this is the first man in the *New Atlantis* who is described as wise. Further, this man's wisdom seems inextricably linked to the society of which he is a member—namely, the House of Salomon. The governor-priest makes mention of the House in a familiar manner, thereby suggesting that the sailors ought to know its function, structure, and history. Yet, this is the first mention of Salomon's House in the text; neither the sailors nor the readers know anything about this institution. At this juncture, both parties must be content with the governor-priest's terse description: "which house or college (my good brethren) is the very eye of this kingdom" (48). Based on the praiseworthy epithet bestowed on the man in the House's service and on the institution itself, one only can conclude that the House of Salomon clearly is associated with wisdom and plays an integral part in Bensalemite society. In studying this wise man further, one may come to a greater understanding of the events of the conversion, as well as the House of Salomon.

Indicative of his wisdom, the wise man is not rash in attempting to approach the pillar. On the contrary, only "having awhile attentively and devoutly contemplated this pillar and cross" (48) does he choose to take action. The wise man's silent, internal deliberation culminates in a prayer to God. First, however, this man prostrates himself: he "f[a]ll[s] down upon his face; and then raise[s] himself upon his knees, and lift[ing] his hands up to heaven," he prays aloud. In prostrating himself, the wise man humbly is making himself as low as possible, as compared to the divine. Raising his hands to the sky, the wise man seems to be giving his heart symbolically to God.[39] Throughout his prayer, the wise man's boat is alongside the boats of the Renfusans, making his actions visible and his words audible to all those assembled on the water.

Bayreuth" ed. Daniel Breazeale, *Untimely Meditations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 197; Renaker seems to concur with Nietzsche's assessment of great events. Noting that "Bacon's precaution of assembling a large crowd of spectators, and rigorously preventing them from being anything *but* spectators, bestows on Bensalem the benefits of the Gospel and simultaneously rescues it from superstition." Renaker 190.

[39] "Let us lift up our hearts with our hands unto God in heaven." Lamentations 3:41; also see Genesis 14:22; Deuteronomy 32:40; Revelations 10:5.

All watch and listen as the wise man begins his prayer with an address to God; to be sure, this prayer is directed to a monotheistic deity who controls both heaven and earth. Entreating the "Lord God of heaven and earth" (48), the wise man demonstrates that he has recognized the divine responsibility for this spectacle. Like the God of the Old Testament, the deity who has sent the Renfusans this pillar is creative. The first line of the Book of Genesis, speaks to the creative power of God: "In the beginning God created heaven and earth."[40] Calling to mind the beginning of the Pentateuch, the wise man is initiating a new spiritual beginning for the island. Subsequent to this event, having extricated itself from previous religious practices, Bensalem declares its conversion to Christianity: the Bensalemites have been reborn.

The second element of the wise man's prayer defends his interpretational authority.[41] The House of Salomon, he reveals, has been granted the privileged ability "to know [the] works" (48) of God. Knowing the works of God, however, seems contingent on knowing "the secrets of" the works of God. Divine grace, according to the wise man, is not proffered to all men; it has, however, been granted to members of Salomon's House. Based on the content of the wise man's exhortation, it appears there is a preexisting covenant between the God of the Old Testament and the House of Salomon. Those of the House of Salomon have found grace in the eyes of God and, accordingly, have been rewarded with knowledge. One can only speculate as to the type of secrets to which the wise man is referring.

Members of Salomon's House have been granted the ability "to discern (as far as apertaineth to the generations of men) between divine miracles, works of nature, works of art, and impostures and illusions of all sorts" (48). In this explanation, there is a distinction between the works of God and the works of men. Knowing, therefore, becomes a matter of being able to distinguish those things of divine origin—miracles and works of nature—from those things of human origin—works of art, impostures, and illusions. Contained in this prayer, then, are the wise man's credentials for being able to determine that the pillar of light before them is the "Finger [of God] and a true Miracle."[42] The wise man's determination that this pillar is the finger of God is later confirmed by Bartholomew's letter, which suggests that God has pointed to the island of Bensalem and chosen her people as recipients of this true miracle.[43]

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[40] Genesis 1:1.

[41] Weinberger posits, "the miracles of God are meant to circumvent the need for speech." Since "Bensalem holds the wise man of Salomon's House to the necessary judge of miracles, it invokes a natural scientific standard that is necessary and yet inapplicable. The Bensalemites' test for veracity debunks the status of miracles altogether." Weinberger, "Science and Rule" 875; White argues that Bensalem's miracle is "effortless redemption." White 164; also consider Paterson, "Baconian Science" 117-19; for a consideration of the Catholic and Protestant doctrines of miracles, see Renaker 182-88.

[42] There are two points of consideration in the wise man's statement—miracles and fingers. According to Bacon, "there was never miracle wrought by God to convert an atheist, because the light of nature might have led him to confess to a God; but miracles have been wrought to convert idolaters and the superstitious,

Reconsidering this event, three types of knowledge accompany its interpretation. First and foremost, determining that the pillar physically exists is based on sensory knowledge: the Renfusans see the pillar. Second, interpreting this miracle is based on the grace of God, who provides wisdom. Third, knowledge is found in books. Readers of these books, as the wise man notes, learn that God "never workest miracles but to a divine and excellent end" (48). As the wise man has learned through his books, God does nothing in vain; there is a purpose to all of God's actions, both miraculous and otherwise. At this point in time, the New Testament has yet to be written; as a result, one is left to speculate in regard to the type of biblical books accessible to the House of Salomon. As if the pillar of light is insufficient to imbue the event with awe, the wise man further entreats God, that by sending the sign, they have entered into a de facto covenant: having sent this "great sign," God "in some part secretly promise[s]" members of the House of Salomon interpretational authority. The wise man is suggesting that all of nature is subject to human analysis, discernment, and understanding.

Upon completion of his prayer, the wise man's boat is suddenly "movable and unbound" (48). The assumption one is encouraged to make, albeit one which is never verified, is that the boat becomes unbound through the power of prayer. So as not to disrupt the sanctity and solemnity of the miracle, the wise man "softly and with silence rowed towards the pillar," while the Renfusans watch from a distance.[44] As he approaches, "the pillar and the cross of light brake up, and cast itself abroad, as it were, into a firmament of many stars." As the casting stars burn

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because no light of nature extendeth to declare the will and true worship of God." Bacon, *Advancement* II.vi.1. As for the pillar being identified as the finger of God, in the second book of *The New Organon* Bacon discusses Prerogative Instances. Among these, he identifies "*Instances of Fingerposts*, borrowing the term from the fingerposts which are set up where roads part to indicate the several directions. These [he] also call[s] *Decisive and Judicial*, and in some cases, *Oracular* and *Commanding Instances*." There is a translational discrepancy between the Jardine and the Anderson editions. I have used the Anderson *Organon* II.xxxvi.

[43] Throughout the Old Testament, miraculous events are said to be the finger of God. For example, "Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, this is the finger of God; and Pharaoh's heart was hardened not unto them" (Exodus 8:19); "And he gave unto Moses, when he has made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God" (Ibid. 31:18); And the Lord delivered unto me two tables of stone written with the finger of God; and on them was written according to all the words, which the Lord spake with you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly" (Deuteronomy 9:10); "When I consider the work of thy fingers, the moon, the stars, which though hast ordained" (Psalm 8:3).

[44] Although it does seem likely, as Renaker suggests, that there is a "crew" aboard the wise man's boat, since Bacon's narrator is silent on the issue, there is no overt indication that there is such a "crew." Renaker 191.

out and vanish, "there [i]s nothing left to be seen but a small ark or a chest of cedar." The wise man lifts this ark into his boat, wherein the ark "open[s] of itself" (49). Inside are a "Book and a Letter; both written in fine parchment, and wrapped in sindons of linen."

There are three interesting peculiarities that surround the ark: first, that it remains "dry, and not wet at all with water, though it swam" (48); second, "that a small green branch of palm" grows from the end of the ark; and third, that the ark opens of its own accord. All three oddities are verified by the wise man, once he has lifted the ark into his boat.[45] Throughout the conversion, the nearest observer remains sixty yards—a considerable distance—from the wise man's boat, and thus sixty yards from the ark: first, the wise man concludes that the ark is dry, although no one else can touch or see the ark; second, the wise man says that there is a palm branch growing from the ark, albeit from a part of the ark that is facing towards him; and last, the wise man claims that the ark opens by itself. There are no other witnesses to these three events; observation and verification is provided solely by the wise man, thereby impeding the possibility of external authentication.

The contents of the ark, both the book and the letter, are miraculous. The book seems to defy the laws of linear time:

> The Book contain[s] all the canonical books of the Old and New Testament, according as you have them, (for we know well what the Churches with you receive); and the Apocalypse itself, and some other books of the New Testament which were not at the time written, were nevertheless in the Book. (49)[46]

Bensalem claims to be in possession of books that are unavailable to other people. If the books contained in the ark were not yet written, then, how can they be given to the Bensalemites? Moreover, if this is the case, what types of books have informed the wise man's actions thus far?

The letter provides an answer to the first question asked of the governor-priest: "who was the apostle of that nation" (47)? Moreover, in the context of the conversion, the letter informs the islanders of the understanding they are to attribute to this event:

> 'I Bartholomew, a servant of the Highest, and Apostle of Jesus Christ, [have been] warned by an angel that appeared to me in a vision of glory, that I should commit this ark to the floods of the sea. Therefore I do testify and declare unto that people where God shall ordain this ark to come to land, that in the same day is come unto them salvation and peace and goodwill, from the Father, and from the Lord Jesus.'

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[45] I share Spitz's skepticism regarding the ark. Spitz 54.

[46] This aside confirms the governor-priest's statement that the Bensalemites "know well most part of the habitable world" (46). How they have obtained this information remains a matter for speculation.

Notably, Bartholomew has never set foot upon the island. His "miraculous evangelism" is accomplished in abstentia.[47] His explanation of this event and his evident absence are worthy of consideration.

Bartholomew identifies himself as "a servant of the Highest, and an apostle of Jesus Christ" (49). Unlike the other men described in the *New Atlantis,* Bartholomew is not a fictional character, but an historical figure. Although the name Bartholomew is identified in the Bible as belonging to one of the apostles, very little is known about the man. He is listed as the sixth[48] or seventh apostle,[49] but no further details of his life or person are revealed. Thus, Bartholomew remains an innocuous apostle whose life is subject to much speculation. There is even some controversy pertaining to his actual name, since the name Bartholomew does not occur in the Gospel of John, leading to speculation regarding Bartholomew's authenticity as an apostle. There are some suggestions that Bartholomew is properly understood as synonymous with Nathaniel.[50] Based on the account of a man named Pantaenus, Bartholomew is allegedly "very famous for his learning,"[51] and is accredited with the conversion of India. Eusebius records that Pantaenus, upon traveling to India,

> found there that among some of those there who had known Christ the Gospel according to Matthew has preceded his coming; for Bartholomew, one of the apostles, had preached to them and had left them the writing of Matthew in Hebrew letters, which was preserved until the time mentioned.[52]

Far from confirming biblical accounts of Bartholomew, Eusebius' historical reference further complicates the matter. Suffice it to say, little is conclusively known about this apostle.

Securing Bartholomew's place in the modern consciousness is an event that occurs after his death. Over fifteen hundred years after the ascension of Christ and after the conversion of Bensalem, France, alongside most of Europe, finds herself in the midst of a theological controversy, the Reformation. Posthumously, Bartholomew lends his name to a slaughter, undertaken in the name of God. August twenty-fourth, St. Bartholomew's Day, 1572, marks the beginning of the French Catholic massacre of French Protestants. Within a week, over one hundred thousand Protestants are killed, to sounds of jubilation from the Vatican. This event is well known and well documented during Bacon's time. The same Saint, whose feast marks the beginning of a slaughter, is also the apostle who converts Bensalem. Bartholomew, once an enigmatic apostle, by Bacon's time has become a political figure. While the Bensalemites who witness the conversion have no way of knowing that Bartholomew will later be associated with a feast which will come to mark a great religious slaughter, Bacon and his readers likely are aware of the relationship between Bartholomew's Feast and the murder of French Protestants. In light of the negative connotations surrounding the saint, why has Bacon accredited Bartholomew with the island's conversion?

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[47] Renaker argues, "The absence of the saint himself, however, is exquisitely appropriate. The purpose of the whole episode being to authenticate a book rather than a man or group of men, Bartholomew himself would only get in the way." Renaker 192.

[48] Matthew 10:13; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:14.

[49] Acts 1:13.

[50] John 1:45-51, 21:2.

[51] Eusebius, *The Ecclesiastical History*, trans. D.D. Kirsopp Lake (New York: The Loeb Classical Library. G.P. Putnam's Sons (1926) Volume 1. V.x.3, 463.

[52] Ibid.

The object that the governor-priest has called an "ark or chest" (49) is confirmed by Bartholomew's letter to be an ark. In "a vision of glory," Bartholomew has been told to "commit this ark to the floods of the sea." It is an angel, rather than Jesus, who dictates the command. Presumably revealed in the vision, Bartholomew claims that the place where the ark comes ashore, and thus the people who inhabit that land, are divinely predestined. Far from being left to chance, God has "ordained" where the ark is to land: he has chosen both the place and the people who are to receive this miracle. In short, the Bensalemites have been chosen by divine will to receive this ark, thus confirming that the finger of God has selected Bensalem. As a result, the Bensalemites, in effect, enter into a covenant with "the Father, and...the Lord Jesus." Upon their conversion to the Christian faith, they are granted "salvation and peace and goodwill."

Having completed his account of the conversion, and having answered both of the sailors' questions in the process, the governor-priest now provides his own explanation of the event—one that is not confirmed directly by the wise man. If the previous miracles are deemed insufficient to warrant conversion, there is a final miracle. Referred to as the "great miracle," this event parallels the "original Gift of Tongues" (49). Scripture records that during the Pentecost, every man, having been imbued by the Holy Spirit, is able to understand all those men around him, regardless of the language which they speak.[53] Similarly, during Bensalem's conversion, each person present is capable of reading "the Book and the letter, as if they ha[ve] been written in his own language" (49).[54]

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[53] Acts 2:1-13.

[54] Linguistic commonality, according to Bacon, is essential to the scientific project. In *The Advancement of Learning*, Bacon states that "[i]n the age after the flood, the first great judgment of God upon the ambition

A reconsideration of the events of Bensalem's conversion leads to additional questions rather than answers. If anything, the Bensalemites seem to have Jewish, or at least Old Testament, roots. Drawing from their preexisting knowledge of God, the House of Salomon already is privileged prior to the conversion. Moreover, Bartholomew is responsible for Bensalemite Christianity. Although the pre-Christian Bensalemites are unlikely able to predict a political event that is to occur fifteen hundred and fifty-odd years in the future, Bacon's contemporaries associate Bartholomew with the Protestant massacre. Since Bartholomew is both a political symbol and the apostle responsible for Bensalem's conversion, Bacon is pointing his readers towards the dangers of religious zealotry.[55] As a result, one might expect Bensalemite Christianity to exhibit characteristics of the Hebraic tradition, as well as a constant vigilance against the dangers of religious extremism.[56] That being said, the Bensalemites are unified by their miraculous conversion and their preferred status with God.

The Third Conversation: The History of Bensalem

The next day after dinner, the governor-priest returns to the Strangers' House. He begins the interchange with the sailors by apologizing for his abrupt departure the previous day. Thus, it seems that leaving in such a manner is considered socially unacceptable according to the customs of the islanders.[57] As amends, the governor-priest recommends he "spend time" with the mariners (49). However, the governor-priest also states that this interaction need occur only if the sailors "h[o]ld his company and conference agreeable."[58] Suggesting that this visit occur only if it is "agreeable" to the sailors seems a formality. Decorum dictates that the sailors cannot admit that such a meeting may be unpleasant; these mariners, as recipients of the hospitality of the

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of man was the confusion of tongues; whereby the open trade and intercourse of learning and knowledge was chiefly imbarred." Bacon, *Advancement* I.vi.8.

[55] For a detailed consideration of the Protestant massacres in France, see Jaques-Auguste de Thou, *The history of the bloody massacres of the Protestants in France in the year of our Lord, 1572.* (1674): fiche 1.

[56] Alternately, White suggests that Bensalemite religion has affinities to "the religious traditions of ancient Egypt." White 166, 169-171.

[57] This is not the first time one of the islanders has offered the sailors an apology: the first is proffered when the man of place does not board the ship, but the sailors are assured that it is not because of "pride or greatness" (40); the second is offered by the officer assigned to transport them to the Strangers' House, in which case, it is the hour decided upon that is deemed excusable (41).

[58] Now, the governor-priest is suggesting a third meeting between himself and the sailors: during the first meeting, the governor-priest "desired to speak with some few of them" (44); during the second meeting, the governor-priest has "come to visit" (46); now, he intends to "spend time with" them.

House of which this man is the governor, are dependent entirely upon him for their current comforts. Moreover, the governor-priest has been the source of all the information that the sailors have received regarding the mysterious island on which they have been stranded. Politely drawing upon their previous two interactions, the sailors admit of nothing more "agreeable and pleasing" than spending time with the governor-priest. The sailors present two testaments of the desirability of such a conversation: first, while the governor-priest speaks, the sailors "forgot both dangers present and fears to come" (50); and second, they "thought an hour spent with him, was worth years of [their] former li[v]e[s]."

By suggesting that the governor-priest encourages them to "forg[e]t both dangers present and fears to come" (50), the sailors seem to be recalling the narrator's previous warnings (50). Forgetting their "danger present and to come" (43), presumably results from their conversations with the governor-priest. It is not only the content of the aforementioned speeches—the new conditions of the sailors' stay, the revelations of the laws of secrecy, and the account of the miraculous conversion—but also the manner of their delivery—the "gracious and parent-like usage" (45) of the governor-priest—that causes this alteration in the sailors' prospects. Because of the governor-priest's demeanor and the information that he has provided, the sailors are no longer fearful of their current predicament; instead, they are content to "spend time" with the governor-priest and thus learn more about the island (49). Resultantly, the more time the sailors are on the island, the more distant their previous lives become. An extended journey at sea, including an extended absence from home, suggests that one who embarks on such an undertaking is interested in the places which are visited. Bensalemite hospitality, "which did appear...daily and prevent [them] with comforts, which [they have] thought not of, much less expected" (46), coupled with the circumstances which have delivered these sailors to the island's shores, are likely to result in gratitude. Even though the governor-priest has been generous, forthcoming, and informative, there are few men with whom one can claim an hour's conversation as equivalent to "years of [one's] former life" (50).[59] The sailors assert that the governor-priest is one such man.[60]

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[59] As opposed to the idiom, 'absence makes the heart grow fonder,' the sailors' emotional response can be expressed in another idiom, 'out of sight, out of mind.'

[60] Two historical figures worthy of such praise are Jesus and Socrates. The importance of Jesus to his followers is evident throughout the four Gospels. As regards the example of Socrates, Xenophon extols his teacher: "So beneficial was Socrates in every matter and in every manner that it was visible to one who examined with even limited perception that there was nothing more beneficial than being a companion of Socrates and spending time with him anywhere at all and in any matter whatsoever." Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, trans. Amy L. Bonnette (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994) IV.1.1.

Maintaining the framework established the previous day, the governor-priest bows in acknowledgement of the sailors' kind words and reiterates that "the questions are on [their] part" (50). In light of the governor-priest's abrupt departure the previous day, an exit which at the time prohibits clarification of Bensalem's conversion, and given his current invitation to question further, one might expect the sailors to probe him now. A number of pertinent questions have arisen as a result of yesterday's exchange: what is the relationship between church and state on Bensalem; is Christianity the only religion practiced on the island, or are there a plurality of observances; what is the number of adherents to each religious group upon the island; are there multiple Christian sects; what are the major Christian rituals celebrated on the island; what is the ceremonial commemoration of the conversion; what type of clergy is on the island; what, if any, is the relationship between the governor-priest as governor of the Strangers' House and his role as a Christian priest; what is the islanders' previous religious adherence; and what are the books to which the wise man refers in his prayer? Instead of entertaining any of the aforementioned questions, the sailors turn from theological matters to more political concerns.

i. Matters of Religion and Matters of Policy

Before the sailors ask their question, two events occur, both of which are relayed by the narrator: first, as before, one sailor speaks on behalf of his crewmates; and second, there is an acknowledged hesitation on the part of this sailor. No mention is made of the reason this sailor chooses to speak, although he seems to be soliciting information on behalf of the entire crew. Furthermore, posing the question in the plural suggests that the subject matter of his inquiry has already been discussed by the mariners. If this is the case, Bacon has chosen to have his narrator omit at least one conversation. Although there have been instances in the narrator's account where conversations appear to have transpired but not been relayed to the reader, this is the first overt example of such an omission. The reader is left to consider where else in the text omissions may have occurred and why these conversations have not been disclosed in the *New Atlantis*.

In regard to the second point—namely, the sailor's hesitation—if the question has indeed been discussed in advance and the following inquiry predetermined by the sailors, the sailor's pause must serve a rhetorical purpose. From the perspective of an observer, a pause often indicates contemplation; in this case, the sailor pauses in order to appear as though he is contemplating which question to ask, or determining how properly to phrase the intended question. There are two oddities in the narrator's account of the sailor's behavior. First, unlike other instances in the text where Bacon's narrator makes clear that the sailors deliberate (38, 39), here no such indication is provided. Nevertheless, it is clear that the matter under consideration has already been debated by the sailors. Therefore, if the purpose of this pause is not for introspective reflection regarding which question to ask or how to phrase it, why does the sailor hesitate? It seems that the pause and appearance of indecision is for the benefit of the governor-priest. Thus, the hesitation is intended theatrically to corroborate what is said: regarding the question that is about to be posed, the sailors are "no less desirous to know, than fearful to ask" (50). Such indecision is conveyed by the hesitation.

Before examining the content of the sailor's second question, it is important to consider two ancient examples of the "unsound longing for coveting and grasping" secrets,[61] discussed in Bacon's *On the Wisdom of the Ancients*. Bacon's fable, "Actaeon and Pentheus, or the Curious," considers the differing dangers of probing for political and religious secrets: Actaeon, who accidentally happens upon Diana while she is naked, is turned into a stag and then dismembered; Pentheus, by conscious design, attempts to learn the secrets of Bacchus and is consequently afflicted with madness. According to Bacon, Actaeon probes "the secrets of princes," while Pentheus probes the "divine secrets." Bacon's sailors have already inquired into the divine secrets of Bensalem. Unlike Pentheus, who secretly "climb[s] a tree" to spy on the Bacchian revelers, these sailors are forthcoming with their questions. As a result, they are unlikely to suffer from "perpetual Inconstancy and vacillating and perplexed judgment." Since the manner in which they ask the governor-priest is direct, they have not spied secretively upon "divine Mysteries." That being said, the fate of Actaeon is not insanity; it is death. Actaeon, unlike these sailors, does not attempt to discover secrets of state; he unknowingly happens upon Diana and unwittingly sees her naked. Actaeon is turned into a stag; he becomes a helpless animal. Similar to Actaeon, these sailors are still in danger; one can posit that while they are secluded in the Strangers' House, the sailors are akin to caged animals. Unlike the ill-fated Actaeon, these sailors behave prudently and cautiously, and avoid probing state secrets, without authorization.

Questioning matters of political practice and policy renders the sailors vulnerable to appearing to pry into Bensalemite secrets of state. And yet, in spite of the political dangers, the sailors are eager to know about Bensalem: the potential benefits outweigh the potential risks. As they have already indicated, "there [i]s no worldly thing on earth more worthy to be known than the state of that happy land" (46). Moreover, the sailors proceed carefully, even hesitantly. Unlike Actaeon, these mariners are aware of the possible dangers of inquiring into secrets of state. On the other hand, the sailors' trepidation is derivative of their intention not to "presume too far" (50). Prudentially, then, the sailors do not want to take undue liberties with the hospitality of the islanders.

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[61] All references in this paragraph are from Bacon, *Wisdom* "Actaeon and Pentheus, or the Curious" 38-40.

As justification for their precocity, the sailor suggests that the governor-priest's behavior serves as the impetus for their solicitation: first, the governor-priest's "rare humanity towards" the sailors (50); and second, the burgeoning acquaintance between the governor-priest and the sailors. During their previous conversation when the sailors inquire into Bensalemite Christianity, they emphasized their foreignness. Since learning of the Bensalemite conversion, they no longer consider themselves "desolate strangers" (41); instead, they reiterate their professed servitude to the governor-priest. As the sailors have already said, they are the "humble" (40) and justly bound (46) servants of the governor-priest. The reader expects the sailor, who has humbled himself before the governor-priest, finally to ask the governor-priest a question.

It seems, however, that he does not yet have "the hardiness to propound" (50) this question. Whereas in the first portion of the preamble, the sailor's focus is on the behavior of the governor-priest and the feelings resultantly evoked in the crew, now, in the second portion of the preamble, the feelings of the sailors are no longer at issue. Instead, the emphasis is on the revelations disclosed by the governor-priest, and on the comparison between what the sailors believe they know and what the governor-priest has said.

Clearly, the sailors' curiosity has been piqued by the governor-priest's revelations the previous day: the solitary situation of the island, the laws of secrecy for travelers, and the rare admission of strangers (46). Their current inquiry is not overtly into the laws themselves, or the minutia of domestic and foreign policy. Rather, the sailors are interested in the ramifications of Bensalemite policy. Based on their own experiences and what they have learned about Bensalem since having arrived on the island—Bensalem's knowledge of languages, international politics, and international religious practices—and the lack of external knowledge about the island—that no one in Europe has "heard any of the least inkling or glimpse of this island"—the sailors find the political situation of the island "wonderful strange" (50). It is unclear to what exactly this conspicuous turn of phrase is intended to apply. Is the apparent political situation of the island wonderfully strange, or is it both wonderful and strange?

In order to explain why he believes that Bensalem is in a "wonderful strange" (50) condition, the sailor recounts the basic principles of the traditional understanding of world politics. Based on the sailor's previous education in global circumstances, "all nations have inter-knowledge one of another." There are three ways in which this inter-knowledge is obtained: "by strangers that come to them," such as foreigners who travel to one's homeland; by travel to foreign countries; and by the accounts of those who have returned from traveling abroad. There are, of course, varying degrees of understanding based on the method by which this international information is acquired. In the case of this island, however, no Bensalemite ships have been recognized abroad, nor have any foreign ships returned from the island.[62]

In itself, the isolation of Bensalem is neither worthy of "marvel" nor "wonderful strange" (50). In spite of the "remote discoveries and navigation of this last age," it remains plausible that a "secret conclave" (51) may remain. Rather, it is the combination of Bensalem's isolationist policy coupled with its global knowledge that warrants consideration. Thus, the sailors' second question resembles their first: it is not the Christianity of the islanders per se that is interesting; rather, it is the Christianity of the islanders in light of their distance from the Holy Land that is remarkable (46-47). Similarly, it is not Bensalemite laws of secrecy per se that are interesting; rather, it is Bensalem's knowledge of other countries in light of her international anonymity that is astounding. Puzzling to the sailors, and also to the reader, is how the possibility exists that a state can know the conditions of the rest of the world and yet remain unknown. Unable to fathom the political conditions which might result in Bensalem's situation, the sailors suspect that there must be supernatural forces at work: the island must employ "divine powers and beings" (51). Notably, throughout this preamble, the sailor emphasizes the distinction between the "hidden and unseen" and the revealed and seen, the dark and the light, and Bensalem and the rest of the world:

> For the situation of it (as his lordship said) in the secret conclave of such a vast sea might cause it. But then that they should have such knowledge of the languages, books, affairs, of those that lie such a distance from them, it was a thing we could not tell what to make of; for that it seemed to us a condition and propriety of divine powers and beings, to be hidden and unseen to others, and yet to have others open and as in a light to them.

At this point in the sailor's speech, the governor-priest, with a "gracious smile,"[63] interjects (51). From his perspective, the caution exercised by the sailor is warranted. Focusing his remarks on the sailor's assertion that the islanders' possess "divine powers," the governor-priest undertakes to assuage the sailors of any preliminary misconception regarding Bensalem's use of magic.[64] Rewording the sailor's question, the governor-priest focuses on the absurdity of his suggestion:

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[62] What has happened to the foreigners who stayed in the Strangers' House thirty-seven years ago?

[63] This is not the first time a Bensalemite has smiled at the crew. The first instance occurs when the sailors initially arrive in the port. The context indicates the ignorance of the sailors to the customs of the island. Offering additional compensation, or being twice paid, is not acceptable on the island. In this context, then, the notary smiles at the sailors and informs them of the custom: "So he left us; and when we offered him some pistolets, he smiling said, 'He must not be twice paid for one labour'" (41). In the second instance, the sailors have already been informed of the impropriety of offering rewards. The officer who escorts the sailors to the Strangers' House is also offered monetary compensation: "We offered him also twenty pistolets; but he smiled, and only said; 'What? Twice paid'" (43)! What, then, do smiles signify on this island? Evidently, a smile is an indication of condescension. All three instances of smiling in the text involve the ignorance of the sailors, specifically their ignorance to the ways of the islanders.

> That we did well to ask pardon for this question we now asked; for that it imported as if we thought this land a land of magicians, that sent forth spirits of the air into all parts, to bring them news and intelligence of other countries.

Described thus, the situation does seem preposterous. The governor-priest has managed to trivialize a potentially valid point; the "divine powers" suggested by the sailor may not have been those of a magician, but rather those of a god. By positing that the sailors think the island employs flying spirits, the governor-priest imports a fantastic element to the sailor's proposal. Moreover, by ridiculing the sailor's observation, the governor-priest, a man of God, belittles the covenant between Bensalem and God, which, while describing the conversion, he previously extolled.

In response, the sailors, for the sixth time, are compelled to humble themselves before the governor-priest. Since the governor-priest has presented his comment in a cordial manner, the narrator determines that the governor-priest's intentions are not malicious, but merry. In this spirit, then, the sailor reforms his query. Originally having suggested that the island has "divine powers…and beings" (51), now the sailor declares that there is "something supernatural…but yet rather as [more] angelical than magical" about Bensalem. This modified locution seems closer to the original intention of the sailor than does his first statement. Privately, the sailors already have compared Bensalem to "a land of angels" (46), an association implied by the insignia of the cherub on the scroll (39). In contrast, the governor-priest, by turning the sailor's point towards magicians, has emphasized the juxtaposition between divine powers and magical powers, and thus between supernatural powers and human powers. A second, unmentioned distinction within the realm of supernatural powers remains: namely, the difference between angelic and demonic powers.

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[64] In Plato's *Republic*, the wizards seem to be men of masks (380d). They are dissemblers in the very core of their beings. As distorters of right and wrong opinion (412e), they lie (383a) and manipulate the pleasures and pains of others (548a). Further, the wizard is castigated for manipulating the shadows on the walls of the cave (602d). Bacon's assessment of magic, in *The Advancement of Learning*, is also scathing. According to Bacon, "herein come in crookedly and dangerously a palliation of a great par of Ceremonial Magic. For it may be pretended that Ceremonies, Characters, and Charms, do work, not by any tacit or sacramental contract with evil spirits, but serve only to strengthen the imagination of him that useth it" (II.xi.3). Bacon is suggesting that the use of magic induces the user to believe in magic. For a detailed consideration of Bacon's understanding of magic, see Paterson, "Baconian Science" 14-15, 26; According to Serjeanston, "what was called natural magic in the Renaissance is a long way from what might now be understood as magic. The modern understanding of magic is closer to what in the Renaissance was called spiritual or demonic magic. This kind of magic invoked spirits to perform feats—often nefarious ones—that were against nature." Serjeanston 87.

Finally, after much meandering, the sailor admits the reason that has "truly…made [them] tender and doubtful to ask this question" (51). Specifically, the reasons for the sailor's hesitancy and the motivation behind the question, are the "laws of secrecy touching strangers" (51). Were the governor-priest not to have mentioned the laws of secrecy, it is unlikely that the sailors would be aware of their existence, or concerned to inquire into them. As before, the sailor emphasizes that the hesitation is motivated by the governor-priest's "former speech, that this land ha[s] laws of secrecy touching strangers."[65]

Once the sailor has clarified the desire and rationale behind his inquiry, the governor-priest agrees to answer the question concerning the conditions of the island. There is not, however, to be full disclosure. Domestic policy dictates that the governor-priest "must reserve some particulars, which it is not lawful for [him] to reveal" (51). It is unclear whether the governor-priest is himself aware of the entire account, or whether he too remains in the dark. Although the extent of the governor-priest's omissions remains unclear, he believes that his account can suffice: he informs the sailors that there "will be enough left to give…satisfaction." Further, of those things legally permissible to disclose, the sailors may "scarce think [them] credible." On the one hand, the governor-priest is unauthorized to provide a comprehensive account of the state of the island, either because he is prohibited by law, or because he is himself unaware. On the other hand, those who are listening are likely to believe the account improbable; in either case, Bacon's readers are left to wonder if the other details, those which are unlawful to reveal, might add credence to the governor-priest's speech.

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[65] Note on the logical order of the sailors' questions: Why do the sailors ask about the conversion of the island first and then ask about the laws of secrecy? Otherwise stated, why is the theological rather than the political history of the island inquired into first by the sailors? First, when considering Bacon's narrator's account of the behavior of both the sailors and the islanders, one must always keep in mind the "possibility of observation" (44) by the islanders. Bearing this in mind, the first and most obvious aspect of Bensalem's apparent national character is her Christianity. From the moment that this ship arrives in her port, Bensalem makes her Christianity known. The initial contact between the island and the ship involves Christian symbols. On the scroll, which indeed may be presented to any ship that arrives in port, is a cross: "the sign of the cross to that instrument was to us a great rejoicing, and as it were a certain presage of good" (37). In the first verbal communication between the islanders and the sailors, the first question asked of the sailors is if they are Christians (40). Further, the oath they must swear is to the Savior (40) and then to Jesus (41). Finally, the Strangers' House is run by a priest, who emphasizes his role as the governor of the House and his obligation to the sailors as strangers, but chiefly as Christians (44). Overtly, then, the island is Christian, and makes their faith known. It is not, however, until the second conversation with the governor-priest that the laws of secrecy are revealed. In fact, the policy of the island is mentioned immediately prior to the governor-priest's solicitation of questions. There is no time for the sailors to consider what has just been revealed, rather nonchalantly, by the governor-priest. Prudence, then, seems to dictate that asking about the conversion of the island might be appreciated by the governor-priest. Further, Christianity is a point of commonality between the sailors and their hosts. In choosing to ask a question about religion, one they may have had time to discuss beforehand, the sailors ensure that when they inquire into the political policies of the island, they can do so in a contrived and salient manner.

ii. The Nautical History of the World

The governor-priest now presents a global history tutorial. Not confined to a study of Bensalem and her laws of secrecy, the governor-priest's lesson serves to educate the sailors in the actual history of the world, or at least the relevant history of the last three thousand years.[66] According to the governor-priest, nautical adventuring was far greater in the past than at present. "[N]otwithstanding all the remote discoveries and navigations in the last age" (50)—thereby acknowledging that Bensalem is aware of the "increase[s]...in these six score years" (51)—the governor-priest is adamant that "three thousand years ago, or somewhat more, the navigation of the world...was greater than at this day." This is not an opinion born from ignorance of recent discoveries; rather, the governor-priest is resolute that the sailors and the inhabitants of the rest of the world are ignorant of the actual history of the world. Save for Bensalem, the rest of the world "has sparing memory, or none" (52) of ancient discovery.[67] This lesson in the development of seafaring begins three thousand years ago, at approximately 1388 B.C.E.

Navigation, according to the governor-priest, starts with Noah. Having spent forty days and forty nights at sea, Noah is an exemplar of seafaring. Drawing from Noah's experiences, ancient men began venturing onto the water with "confidence" (52). Within a thousand years of the great flood, Phoenicia, its principal city of Tyre and its colony of Carthage, Egypt, Palestina, China, the Great Atlantis (America),[68] and Bensalem maintained active fleets. All of the aforementioned countries, even those believed to have been discovered recently, not only are well known to the ancients, but once composed a complex trade network, of which Bensalem was an integral part. "[K]nown and frequented by the ships and vessels of the nations named," ancient Bensalem was a cultural center, hosting foreign dignitaries, intellectuals including philosophers and scientists, and merchants. As the governor-priest relates, "almost all nations of might and fame resorted" to Bensalem. Even nations that did not themselves then have sailors—namely, "Persians, Caldeans, Arabians"—traveled to Bensalem. Consequently, "some stirps and little tribes" of the aforementioned peoples remain on the island to this day. As earlier stated by the governor-priest, "Hebrews, Persians, and Indians, besides the natives" (49) lived on the island at the time of its conversion. Not only was Bensalem visited by other peoples, but she also was involved in foreign travel. In their fleet of "fifteen hundred strong ships" (52), the Bensalemites traveled throughout the Atlantic and Mediterranean seas, as well as to the Orient.

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[66] For a reconstruction of the text's chronology see White 104 fn. 10, 121-22; Weinberger, "Science and Rule" 877-78; Paterson, "Baconian Science" 122-23, 130.

[67] In the *Advancement of Learning*, Bacon elaborates upon the three kinds of perfect Histories: those that represent a time, person, or action. All three of these categories are present in the governor-priest's discussion of the history of Bensalem. Histories of times, "the most complete and absolute kind of history," "representeth the magnitude of actions, and the public faces and deportments of persons, and passeth over in silence the smaller passages and motions of men:" the governor-priest's general discussion of the nautical history of the world seems to fall into this category. Histories of persons, which "excelleth in profit and use," depicting the life of a person in whose "actions both greater and smaller, public and private, have a commixture, must of necessity contain a more true, native, and lively representation:" the governor-priest's discussion of both Altabin and Solamona seem to fall into this category. And the histories of actions, which "excelleth...in verity and sincerity," present discussions of single events, such as war. This third category of history, by nature of being narrated, is "less "purely and exactly true" than histories of time; an author can choose to omit or emphasize details which are to his advantage. From this brief discussion of Bacon's understanding of histories, the governor-priest, within his discussion, seems familiar with this tripartite division of true histories. Bacon, *Advancement* II.ii.5.

[68] White considers the historical precedents for identifying Plato's Atlantis with America. White 143.

Given that the rest of the world has "sparing memory, or none," of this history, the validity of the governor-priest's account rests on Bensalem's "faithful registers of the times" (52).[69] Presuming that the governor-priest's account is accurate, international ignorance regarding Bensalem is a new phenomenon: Bensalem has not always been unknown. Based on this interesting alteration in Bensalem's relationship with the rest of the world, the pertinence of the sailors' question, and most likely their curiosity, have increased. How is it possible that Bensalem is unknown now when it was known previously? And how, given their anonymity, has Bensalem remained informed about the development of the rest of the world?

iii. The War with Atlantis

Prior to answering the sailor's question about the anonymity of the island, the governor-priest turns to an unsolicited topic: an account of the great Atlantis. According to the governor-priest, ancient Bensalem and the great Atlantis at one time were frequented by each other (52). Since the governor-priest chooses to discuss in detail the relationship between these two states, an understanding of Bensalem's current political situation is inseparable from the history of the great Atlantis. By reminding the sailors of the "poetical and fabulous" account of Atlantis as recorded by a "great man," the governor-priest effectively incorporates information known by the sailors into the novel account he is presenting. Atlantis is primarily described in two Platonic dialogues, the *Timaeus* and the *Critias*, both of which are available during Bacon's time and likely familiar to at least some of these sailors and some of Bacon's readers.[70]

Either doubting the sailors' memory of Atlantis, or simply providing a brief account, the governor-priest highlights a number of features of the old Atlantis. Choosing not to focus on the size of the population, the major areas of trade, the governing structure, or the religious affiliations of Atlantis, instead the governor-priest concurs with the Platonic account, insofar as he describes the genealogy, architecture, and topography of the state.[71] Atlantis was inhabited by the progeny of Neptune. As the offspring of the God of the Sea, the Atlantans were of divine descent and likely had a natural predilection for seafaring. The buildings on the island were "magnificent," while "the manifold streams of goodly navigable rivers" not only provided the site of the temple, but also served as a means of transportation for the population. On these three points, the Bensalemite account and the Platonic account are in agreement. At this junction in the governor-priest's history, the Platonic and Bensalemite accounts diverge. Whereas the Platonic account considers Atlantis in conflict with ancient Athens, the governor-priest focuses on the relationship between Atlantis and Bensalem. Each respective analysis focuses on the relationship between Atlantis and the home state of the recounting historian: the old Athens and the old Bensalem were both enemies of the old Atlantis.

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[69] Bensalem does seem to keep very thorough records. Recall the notary who recorded the oath of the sailors, both on the boat and while it was officially given on the ship (40, 41).

[70] For a more detailed consideration of the relationship between the *New Atlantis* and the Atlantan dialogues, see White 112-34.

In his second mention of Atlantis, the governor-priest states, "At the same time, and an age after, or more, the inhabitants of the great Atlantis did flourish" (53). Two additional states, not mentioned in his original discussion, are considered now in relation to Atlantis: the "country of Atlantis, as well that of Peru, then called Coya, a[nd] that of Mexico, then called Tyrambel, were mighty and proud kingdoms in arms, shipping, and riches." It appears, then, that the original countries and cities mentioned by the governor-priest in regards to sailing—Phoenicia, Tyre, Carthage, Egypt, Palestine, China, and the great Atlantis (America)—also include Coya (Peru) and Tyrambel (Mexico). During this age of seafaring, these three nations, comprising the contemporary Americas—Atlantis (America), Coya (Peru), and Tyrambel (Mexico)—according to the governor-priest, were economically influential, militaristically formidable, and aware of their international power. As a result of their domination, they chose to undertake a number of colonial expeditions:

> at one time (or at least within the space of ten years) they both made two great expeditions; they of Tyrambel through the Atlantic to the Mediterrane Sea; and they of Coya through the South Sea upon [Bensalem]. And for the former of these, which was into Europe.

At this point in the governor-priest's account, the history becomes difficult to follow. In order to add clarity to his description, one question is essential: what was the political relationship between Atlantis, Coya, and Tyrambel?

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[71] The *New Atlantis* focuses on the apparel, architecture, and religiosity of the island of Atlantis. Bacon's narrator may have formulated his account based on the example here established by the governor-priest.

Bearing this question in mind, we return to the Bensalemite's historical account. First, two great expeditions were undertaken. Although the governor-priest initially suggests that the expeditions were simultaneous, he modifies his original assertion in a parenthetical remark; if the expeditions were not "at one time," they were "at least within the space of ten years" (53). From a military perspective, the chronology of these undertakings is of considerable import; were the invasions concurrent, or were they within ten years of each other?

Second, it is unclear, from the governor-priest's account, who undertook these two missions. Ostensibly, the two operations were undertaken by Coya and Tyrambel: "they of Tyrambel through the Atlantic to the Mediterrane Sea; and they of Coya through the South Sea upon" Bensalem (53). If the two expeditions are undertaken by Coya and Tyrambel, what is Atlantis' role? There seem to be two plausible possibilities: first, Atlantis is simply another "mighty and proud" nation, worthy of mention because of her proximity to Coya and Tyrambel; or alternately, the relationship between these three nations is more complex than it appears initially, and Atlantis somehow is involved in these two expeditions. Moreover, there is nothing particularly noteworthy if two autonomous states undertake simultaneous missions. However, if the states are united, then the endeavor is based on a consideration of their mutual military strength. At this point, it is too soon to make any assertions regarding the political climate of the Americas. However, it is essential to keep this question in mind throughout the governor-priest's account.

As previously stated, the Platonic dialogues only discuss a single expedition: the attempted invasion of Athens by Atlantis. The governor-priest is reluctant to confirm any particulars discussed in the *Timaeus* or the *Critias*. Either Bensalem's history does not record the details of the attack on the Mediterranean, or these are the type of details to which the governor-priest "must reserve some particulars, which it is not lawful for [him] to reveal" (51). It is possible, although not definitive, that "the ancient Athenians…ha[d] the glory of the repulse and resistance" (53) of the Tyrambelians. The only aspect of the attack on the Mediterranean which the governor-priest is willing to admit is that "there never came back either ship or man from that voyage." In that case, Tyrambel's fleet, including both men and ships, was completely destroyed on this expedition.

Bensalemite concern rests with the expedition which attacked their island. Having confirmed the destruction of Tyrambel's fleet, the governor-priest turns to the fate of Coya. Were Coya "not [to have] met with enemies of greater clemency," she is certain to have suffered the same defeat as Tyrambel (53). Of note is the governor-priest's suggestion that "fortune" plays a role in military matters. Although on one level this may be true, there are unforeseen circumstances which can arise in war. Supposedly, being a skilled military strategist entails taking into account all of the possible contingencies. Fortune, then, can be overcome with knowledge of both one's own military prowess and the military strengths and weaknesses of one's enemies. The test of an adept military strategist, then, lies in his ability to conquer unforeseen events.

This type of "fortune" is evidenced by the leader of the Bensalemite forces. During the Coyan attack, Bensalem was ruled by a king "(by name Altabin) a wise man and a great warrior" (53). Altabin is the first man named in the text. According to Weinberger, Altabin is etymologically derivative of two Latin words meaning, "twice lofty."[72] Altabin is characterized as both "a wise man and a great warrior," two traits that are inextricably linked. Moreover, his wisdom and military strength are of a twofold character: Altabin possesses both self-knowledge and knowledge of other men. From a military perspective, it is necessary to have knowledge of both one's own strengths and weaknesses, as well as those of one's enemies; both aspects of this knowledge are required to wage an effective war.

Details of the conflict between Bensalem and Coya are sparse, to say the least. Presumably, the Coyans sailed to Bensalem with the express purpose of conquering the island. Information that typically accompanies military history is lacking—the number of Coyan ships, ground troops, armaments, and supplies. Bensalem, as the governor-priest has revealed, possesses a fleet "fifteen hundred strong," which encircled the invading ships (52). Little is known about the Coyan fleet, other than it being "mighty and proud...in arms, shipping, and riches" (53). The naval strength of the Bensalemites seems to surpass that of the Coyans. This war, however, was not limited to the sea, but was also fought on land; in fact, Coyan ground troops were able to breach the island. Despite what may be considered an initial victory, specifically landing, the Coyan troops were overpowered by those of Bensalem. Although the status of Bensalem's ground troops is never revealed and is conspicuous as a result of its absence, they were powerful enough to surround the Coyans.

One strategic maneuver is discussed by the governor-priest; Altabin was able to "cut off [Coya's] ground forces from their ships" (53). In doing so, Altabin was able to separate the Coyan ground troops from their supplies. As a result of this division, and the "greater power" of Bensalem, the Coyans were "compelled…to render themselves without striking stroke" (54). The Coyan response is shocking. They sailed all the way to Bensalem to wage a war, but once divided, chose not to fight. How does Altabin compel the invaders to surrender? Does he threaten them, or their families? Does he kidnap their leader? Does he spread dissent within the ranks? Surrender, without any altercation, seems an idealized account of the event.[73] Even more unbelievable is the fact that, once at his "mercy," Altabin allows the Coyans to return home. Content with the Coyans' word, "their oath that they should no more bear arms against him," he allows them to depart.

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[72] Weinberger, *New Atlantis* 53 fn 115; White 144.

While it may be difficult to understand why the Coyans depart without a battle, and equally difficult to understand why Altabin allows the Coyans to depart based on their oath never to return, Bacon's fable "Styx, or Treaties" may shed light on the issue. In the aforementioned fable, "it is Necessity (Lord to the Great powers), and danger to the state, and communication of utility"[74] that are the true foundation of treaties. Altabin, in some unknown way, compels the Coyans both to retreat and to swear never to return to Bensalem. Wise in both military matters and practical politics, Altabin knows that which the Coyans believe they require to live: he has assessed and threatened what the Coyans believe are necessities. Requirements for survival, those things without which the Coyans cannot live, have been threatened by Altabin: those things "from which there is no return." If this is the case, then the apparently bizarre behavior of both parties can be understood more fully. It is not a simple oath that has prevented this war. Rather, it is the contents of the oath and the threat of loss that have prevented the intended altercation. How the Coyans have been threatened and what they stand to lose remain matters for speculation.

Details of their peace and the relevant oath are as sparse as those pertaining to the battle. If this account is accurate, then as evidenced by Bensalemite leniency, despite its strength, the old Bensalem was not gratuitously violent. Already seen in the islanders' treatment of the sailors,

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[73] Sun Tzu, in *The Art of War*, discusses military tactics and the rending of an opposing army without violence. While it is unlikely that Bacon had access to *The Art of War*, despite being written between 400-320 BC, it is unclear when the text was translated and reached Europe. That being said, the military ideal exhibited in the governor-priest's account of the war between Coya and Bensalem expounds the ideals established in *The Art of War*. First, the ideal military leader bears a noteworthy resemblance to Altabin: both Altabin and Sun Tzu's general possess self-knowledge and knowledge of others: "Therefore I say: 'Know the enemy and know yourself; in a hundred battles you will never be in peril.'" Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, trans. Samuel B. Griffith (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963) III.31. According to Bacon's narrator, Altabin knows "well both his own strength and that of his enemies" (53). His military understanding echoes the understanding which Sun Tzu advocates. Second, the unfathomable detail of the governor-priest's account of the war—that Altabin "compelled them to render themselves without striking stroke" (54), is considered the apex of military achievement by Sun Tzu: "To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill." Sun Tzu III.3 cf. 10. And yet, a single questions remains: how does a military tactician rend an army without fighting? According to Sun Tzu, this is accomplished prior to the official start of battle. This possibility can exist only with preparation before the fact. In the *New Atlantis*, there is no discussion of Altabin's preparatory measures; Sun Tzu, on the other hand, is not as reticent. By engaging secret agents and covert tactics, a military strategist may infiltrate an opposing army. Sun Tzu's suggestion adds a level of intentionality to the governor-priest's trite comment regarding Bensalem's sending "forth spirits of the air into all parts, to bring them news and intelligence of other countries" (51).

[74] Bacon, *Wisdom* "Styx, or Treaties" 20.

Bensalem, where possible, unlike ancient Athens, seems to prefer diplomatic solutions to violent ones. In this case, however, the precise nature of the chosen diplomatic resolution is vague. The governor-priest does not explain how the Bensalemites were able to restrain the threat to their island once they had permitted the Coyans to retreat—now bound by their oath, for what that is worth. As such, Altabin's tactical maneuver—namely, cutting off the ground troops from their supplies—must not have been the primary reason for the Coyan defeat.

Despite Bensalem's clemency, "within less than the space of one hundred years, the great Atlantis was utterly lost and destroyed" (54). Echoing the Platonic account, the destruction of Atlantis is not of human design, but rather is natural. Plato records that "monstrous earthquakes and floods came about…and the island of Atlantis…sank beneath the sea and disappeared."[75] According to Bensalem's history, it was "not by a great earthquake, as your man saith, (for that whole tract is less subject to earthquakes,) but by a particular deluge or inundation" (54) that Atlantis was destroyed. Focusing on the deluge, as opposed to the earthquake, lends impermanence to the submersion of Atlantis: Atlantis did not sink "beneath the sea and disappear;"[76] rather, it is hidden beneath the water and thus lost only temporarily.

The speed and duration of this flood is not discussed. Instead, the governor-priest focuses on the depth of the water. Although this inundation was "not past forty foot, in most places," it was deep enough that "it destroyed man and beast generally" (54). Unlike Noah and his sons, the Atlantans were "not able to leave, letters, art, and civility to their posterity" (55). With the destruction of their infrastructure, basic necessities became the primary concern of the survivors—food, shelter, and clothing. Strangely, the governor-priest chooses to focus his account on the survivors' apparel. By making mention of the adornment of the survivors, the governor-priest points to man's vanity.[77] Destitute and barely meeting basic needs, the Atlantans remained concerned with their appearance. A great pride developed in "the feathers of birds." As a result of this flood, a great civilization was plummeted into a dark age, making her people "rude and ignorant," and forcing her to begin anew. This explains the current behavior of the Americans; they are "a young people" (54)—one thousand years younger than the rest of the peoples of the world.

Despite being a compelling description of the destruction of Atlantis and the devolution of nautical travel, the governor-priest's account does admit of a number of complications. In his original discussion, the governor-priest highlights that Atlantis is a "mighty and proud kingdo[m], in arms, shipping, and riches" (53). How is it possible that none of the Atlantans of higher stock escaped this flood on their ships and, once afloat, rebuilt their civilization? Unfortunately, this question is neither asked nor answered.

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[75] Plato, *Plato's Timaeus*, trans. Peter Kalkavage (Newburyport: Focus Publishing, 2001) 25d.

[76] Ibid. 25d.

[77] Vanity is discussed in greater detail in the conclusion of this thesis.

The "Divine Revenge" (54), to which the governor-priest previously attributes the destruction of Atlantis, is now called a "main accident of time" or a "natural revolution of time" (55). By describing the event in this way, the governor-priest seems to be conflating divine retribution and natural accidents. In doing so, he appears to be devaluing any possibility of there being an intervening God. If every event is somehow attributable to nature, then there is no possibility of either divine intervention or miracles.[78] Those events which otherwise are inexplicable are understood as the unforeseen conjunction of causes, rather than the result of otherworldly purposes.[79]

As a result of the Atlantan catastrophe, "navigation did every where greatly decay" (55). Isolated from her nearest trading partner, Bensalem, in effect, becomes a technologically and socially advanced nation in the vicinity of a nation which has just been rendered rude and ignorant. Only in the event of "rare accident[s]," such as the one which brings the sailors to Bensalem's shore, do foreigners visit the island. Following the destruction of Atlantis, the need to sail great distances decreases, and with it the need for seafaring vessels. All of the aforementioned nations which have partaken in this international trade, with the exception of Bensalem, have lost their technological knowledge. Forgetting how to build great boats and no longer requiring great boats, the fleets of these nations are reduced to "junks and canoes" (52). This explanation, however, does not provide an answer to the sailor's question—how Bensalem knows about the rest of the world, while remaining unknown.

Admittedly having accounted for the lack of travel to Bensalem, the governor-priest has yet to explain the lack of travel between Bensalem and the rest of the world. To be sure, Bensalem's fleet is now as strong as during Altabin's reign; Bensalem's "shipping, for number, strength, mariners, pilots, and things that appertaineth to navigation is as great as ever" (55)—that being "fifteen hundred strong ships, of great content" (52). Despite the general decline in seafaring, Bensalem has taken the time and spent the money to maintain her fleet. Decay and disuse, specifically the inability to travel, is not the reason Bensalem is not known abroad. At this point in his speech, the governor-priest poses a rhetorical question: "why should we sit at home" (56)? In addressing this rhetorical question, the governor-priest claims that he is coming towards answering the sailor's original question. What then has been the purpose of this lengthy digression?

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[78] According to Paterson, "a speech which begins by asserting a divine governance of nature which punishes injustice between nations, ends by implying that human existence is at the mercy of natural forces that operate without reference to our humility or pride, justice or injustice." Paterson, "Role of Christianity" 424.

[79] In this discussion, the governor-priest distinguishes between "wars [and] natural revolutions of time." War, then, cannot be understood as natural. The suggestion seems to be that in modern scientific republics, there is just no need for war. By extension, then, the suggestion is that war, by undermining the stability of a regime, compromises the pursuit of science.

iv. Salomon's House

In approximately 288 B.C., one thousand years after the destruction of Atlantis, Bensalem undergoes a major political change. Substantial enough to be regarded as a second founding, the island's laws are redrafted. History records that the king who entrenched these laws was "a divine instrument, though a mortal man" (56), "had a large heart, inscrutable for good," had "noble and heroical intentions," and in general, was "excellent" (58). Otherwise, little is disclosed about the King under whose authority these reforms have taken place; his nationality, whether he was a Bensalemite or foreigner, the manner in which he rose to power, whether his throne was hereditary, elected, or attained by force, and provisions for the kingship following his death, all remain matters of speculation. Above speculation is the reverence with which King Solamona is remembered; it is his "memory above all others [that Bensalemites] most adore" (56). It is fair to presume that the adoration bestowed upon the memory of this King may not account for all of his actions; perhaps the picture painted of Solamona by the governor-priest is of a beautified founder.

Prior to Solamona's ascent to the throne and during his reign, Bensalem existed in a "happy and flourishing estate" (56). Neither the calamity of America, the "wars," nor "natural revolutions of time" (55) had a negative effect on the island: nautically, her power remained strong; agriculturally, there was a "rare fertility of soil" (56); and economically, the island was "sufficient and substantial [enough…] to maintain itself without any aid at all of the foreigner." Evidently, Bensalem had the resources and was in a political position to be entirely self-sufficient. Being capable of self-sufficiency, however, does not necessarily warrant becoming isolationists. Because of the island's prosperity and a desire to ensure its continuance, Solamona entrenched a radical change in foreign and domestic policy: it is he who implemented the laws of isolation and secrecy.

Undertaking "to give perpetuity to that which was in his time so happily established" (56), Solamona, as lawgiver, actualized new orders. Recognizing the inevitable danger of political change, that a country "might be a thousand ways altered to the worse, but scarce any one way to the better," Solamona's reforms might have had a negative impact on the island. Machiavelli elaborates on this danger:

> nothing is more difficult to handle, more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to manage, than to put oneself at the head of introducing new orders. For the introducer has all those who benefit from the old orders as enemies, and he has lukewarm defenders in all those who might benefit from the new orders.[80]

Based on Solamona's reforms and given Bensalem's apparent former prosperity, the manner in which the island might have been harmed by such changes becomes evident. There are two ways in which to consider this problem: first, in terms of foreign policy; and second, in terms of domestic policy.

America has been destroyed, and the rest of the world has quickly forgotten their nautical prowess. However, by choosing to retreat, Bensalem decided not to interfere in international development. Bensalem had the power to assist in the rebuilding of the Americas, and also the means to ensure that the rest of the world maintain their fleets; yet, it chose not to help. Instead, Bensalem instituted a non-interference policy. In doing so, Bensalem idly watched the great nations of the age regress. Why did Bensalem not intercede and encourage progress? This foreign policy decision, namely permitting the rest of the world to forget the events and advancements that had occurred, has obvious domestic ramifications. Any Bensalemite who is involved with the rest of the world, loses that association; all of those individuals who are involved in international trade, commerce, or travel are no longer permitted to go abroad; any Bensalemite expatriates must decide, if they even are given a choice, to remain abroad, or on Bensalem indefinitely. With the thousands of ways in which the island may be harmed by an isolationist policy, in what ways can the island be benefited? What did Solamona foresee that required such a radical change in policy?[81]

In his capacity as lawgiver, Solamana entrenched the "fundamental laws of this kingdom" (56). Indubitably, these newly implemented orders extended to all areas of life; presumably, Solamona reformed education, taxation, social security, and all other domestic institutions. The governor-priest does not reveal the "other fundamental laws of this kingdom;" instead, he moves directly to "the interdicts and prohibitions [they] have touching strangers." Apparently contradicting his statement of a moment earlier—that by Solamona's time, visitation to Bensalem had "long since ceased; except it were by some rare accident" (55)—now, according to the governor-priest, these accidents that involve the "entrance of strangers; which at that time (though it was after the calamity of America) were frequent" (56). Given the governor-priest's amendment, we are to accept that Bensalem had been subject to regular visits from foreigners between the destruction of Atlantis and the institution of Solamona's policy. Although foreign traffic may have continued, one assumes that the quality of the visitors decreased, and thus the benefits garnered from international interaction have been reduced.

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[80] Nicollò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Harvey C. Masfield 2nd ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998) VI.

[81] Two possible answers to this question are put forth by Paterson, who argues that Solamona feared "the mixture of Roman power and Greek thought," or the perceived danger that external influence would pose to the House of Salomon. Paterson, "Baconian Science" 131-135.

Bensalem is not the only country known for prohibiting foreigners. China, the intended destination of the sailors, has similar laws. By mentioning China, the governor-priest invites the sailors to consider Bensalem's law prohibiting the admission of strangers, with "the like law…in the kingdom of China" (56). Prior to the calamity of America, China was one of the countries that visited and was visited by Bensalem (52). China's policy, according to the governor-priest, has had a deleterious impact on its people; the prohibition of strangers in China "hath made them a curious, ignorant, fearful, foolish nation" (57). Comparatively, then, the people of Bensalem are neither curious, ignorant, fearful, nor foolish as a result of their isolation. China's law has been instituted as a result of "pusillanimity and fear," unlike Solamona's injunctions. Bensalem's laws were instituted because Solamona "doubted novelties, and commixtures of manners." The different intentions between China's and Bensalem's laws seem to be semantic: both laws have been entrenched to prevent the mixing of peoples.

Where the policies differ is in their disposition. Memory records that Solamona's intentions were "of another temper" (57). Of this fact, the governor-priest presents corroborative evidence: "first, he hath preserved all points of humanity, in taking order and making provisions for the relief of strangers distressed; whereof you have tasted." One must then presume that China did not provide for strangers. Not only did the rationales of the laws differ, but so too did the results of the laws. As such, the resultant condition of China must be compared with that of Bensalem. Whereas China's fleet has been reduced to "junks and canoes," Bensalem's remains strong. While China's people are ignorant, rude, and fearful, Bensalem's people are the opposite. At this point, during which the governor-priest acknowledges the "provisions for the relief of strangers," the sailors bow in affirmation. The Strangers' House, although designed to lodge strangers, is also a benefit to the islanders. Secluding new arrivals for a period of three days, in order to "take some taste of [the] manners and conditions" (44) of the strangers, allows the islanders to observe and assess the nature of the strangers. It is only after three days that the sailors are permitted to interact with the locals. In this way, then, Bensalem is able to control those strangers who bring "novelties, and commixtures of manners" (56) to the island.

Isolationist policies in general seem to fall victim to a series of problems which were addressed by Solamona: it is "against humanity to detain strangers here against their wills, and against policy that they should return and discover their knowledge of this estate" (57).

Solamona's humanitarian solution to the problem posed by strangers admits of a number of complications. First, "of the strangers that should be permitted to land, as many (at all times) might depart as would" (57). The initial control that Solamona institutes is in landing: not all of the ships who reach Bensalem's shores are permitted to land. This initial prohibition has been evinced by the islanders' behavior when these sailors arrive in port: the scroll contains the indictment not to land and to depart within sixteen days (38). Presumably, then, only those sailors who are deemed to have an intention of remaining, are permitted to disembark. Second, Solamona's reforms stipulate that any who are permitted to land are also permitted to leave: no stranger is to be detained on the island against his will. Taking the governor-priest's claims at face value, one may note that being allowed to depart does not preclude being enticed to remain. Although these sailors have yet to receive a complete account of the island, they are no longer fearful. Based on the angelic treatment of the sailors by the islanders, the provisions for the relief of strangers are designed to ensure that they choose to remain on Bensalem. Bensalemite hospitality, as the sailors' have noticed, is a unique and heavenly experience. State provisions for the internment of strangers extend beyond any and all expectations of the sailors. Although the sailors are aware that they are to be "defray[ed]… all the time [they] stay" (45), dispensation by the state for the duration of strangers' stay seems to extend for the entire duration of their stay—even if they choose to remain indefinitely.

According to the governor-priest, in the nineteen hundred years since the reforms, "not one ship [has] ever returned; and but thirteen persons only" (57). Lacking memory of a ship returning, and not having had a ship return, are not the same thing. The first suggests that no ship that has attempted to return has been permitted to land. The latter suggests that no ship has attempted to return. Two additional possibilities exist: first, it is unclear whether no ships have returned because no ships have chosen to depart; and second, it is unclear whether no ships have returned because no ships have been allowed to leave. Logically, if no ship has left, then no ship can attempt to return.

An additional complication is posed by the thirteen people who have chosen to return to Bensalem. How they have returned is not clear. They cannot have returned with their original crews, as no ship has returned: as such, those who have chosen to return must have directed additional ships to the island; or, as a result of shipwrecks, they have been forced to return. Never revealed is the number of ships and the number of men that have been granted the right to land in the first place. If only thirteen men have landed, and thirteen have returned, the nature of the problem changes.

Politically, Bensalem is subject to a unique danger because of this policy. China is known by the international community, as is her policy prohibiting the entrance of strangers. Neither Bensalem nor her policy is known. Shrouded in secrecy, Bensalem is "utterly unknown" (37). Unlike China, Bensalemite policy involves the maintenance of international ignorance regarding her existence. Allegedly, the only official preserve against discovery is an assurance of the lack of believability surrounding the island's reality: as the governor-priest explains, "What those few that returned may have reported abroad I know not. But you must think, whatsoever they have said could be taken where they came but for a dream" (57). Prior to his account of the island, the governor-priest informed the sailors of the possibility that they "will scarce think [his account] credible" (51).

This Bensalemite policy is ridiculous. Essentially, the governor-priest is suggesting that most men have no natural curiosity. One need only consider the behavior of these sailors upon learning of the local laws of secrecy in order to demonstrate the infeasibility of this practice. Relying on human apathy in matters of state security is not only imprudent, but also laughable. Delusions and insanity, as matters of policy, seem to cloud a far more decisive means of securing state privacy, one which is not revealed by, and perhaps even unknown to, the governor-priest. Is the governor-priest to be believed, or is there a more definitive means of ensuring the anonymity of the island?

Isolationist policies generally have two aspects: first, as discussed, they prevent foreign influence from entering one's state; second, they involve prohibitions against one's own citizens traveling abroad. The variant approaches to this problem are evidenced by Bensalem and China. Solamona "thought fit altogether to restrain" (57) Bensalemite travel abroad. Unlike the Chinese, who "sail where they will or can," Bensalemites remain confined within their territory. China's law, then, can be understood as motivated by fear and cowardice, whereas Bensalem's law is motivated by courage. There is, however, one exception to the Bensalemite prohibition against international travel.

Utter and complete restraint, as it turns out, has one exemption on Bensalem. As mentioned, the danger of isolationist policies is that a country loses the benefit "which cometh by communicating with strangers" (57). Bensalem, as a result of this exception, has managed to retain the advantage of external contact, while "avoiding the hurt." Permission to travel abroad, according to the governor-priest, is limited to the Brethren of the House of Salomon.

One previous mention of the House of Salomon has been made by the governor-priest. In relating the history of the island's conversion, "one of the wise men of the society of Salomon's House" (48) mediated the event. At that time, the "house or college" is described as "the very eye of this kingdom." Since this original mention, no inquiry has been made by the sailors into this fundamental institution. According to the governor-priest, the House of Salomon—"the noblest foundation…that was ever upon the earth, and the lanthorn of this kingdom" (58)—was founded by Solamona. At the same time as he instituted the laws of secrecy, Solamona founded an institute "dedicated to the study of the Works and Creatures of God." Solamona's isolationist policy and the pursuit of science seem to be connected. While explaining the "Order or Society which [they] call *Salomon's House*," the governor-priest is clearly emotional. For instance, when the governor-priest first mentions this institute, he addresses the sailors as his "good brethren" (48), and now he calls them his "dear friends" (58).[82]

Evidently, Salomon's House bears a striking resemblance to the name of its founder. While this similarity is so obvious, "[s]ome think it beareth the founder's name a little corrupted, as if it should be Solamona's House. But the records write it as it was spoken" (58). Although not corroborated by island records, the governor-priest holds an opinion regarding the origin of the name of the House; he believes that the House is named for the biblical Solomon, after whom Solamona clearly is named. Apparently Bensalemites "have some parts of [Solomon's] works which…are lost; namely, that Natural History which he wrote, of all plants, from the *cedar of Libanus* to the *moss that groweth out of the wall*, and of all *things that have life and motion*." Works to which passing references are made in the Bible, but otherwise are lost, are preserved in their entirety on Bensalem. If the House indeed is named after King Solomon, one is encouraged to consider King Solamona in relation to King Solomon. Like his biblical namesake, Solamona is remembered as having a "large heart"[83] which is "inscrutable for good" (56).[84] Presenting the possible relationship between Bensalem's Solamona and the Hebrew's Solomon, the governor-priest voices his opinion rather than domestic consensus.

Further bolstered by the "ancient records," the governor-priest's assumption regarding the relationship between the House of Salomon and the Old Testament may prove correct (58). Transcripts record a second name of the Order, "the College of the Six Days' Works." It is the combination of the two names—Salomon's House and the College of the Six Days' Works—that provides the governor-priest with satisfaction regarding his assertion. These two biblical allusions point to Solamona's dependence on the Hebrews: this "excellent king had learned from the Hebrews that God had created the world and all that therein is within six days." That a relationship exists between the House of Salomon and the Hebrews also is evidenced at the time of the conversion. In the governor-priest's account, one of the "wise men" of Salomon's House is present at the miracle (47). During this man's prayer, he appeals to the "Lord God of heaven and earth" (48), and cites textual evidence from books of God. The aforementioned prayer culminates when the wise man evokes a covenant between God and members of the House of Salomon. Based on the precepts of their covenant, God has given "grace to those of [the] order, to know [his] works of creation, and the secrets of them" (48). This sentiment is now echoed by the governor-priest. In iterating the relationship between the House and God, the governor-priest suggests that the House has been instituted "for the finding out of things, (whereby God might have the more glory in the workmanship of them, and men the more fruit in the use of them)" (58). Thus, resulting from its divine origin, the House has a twofold purpose: first, it honors God in finding additional uses for God's works; and second, it honors men in the benefits garnered from the works developed. It becomes clear that at the time of the inception of the House, prior to the birth of Jesus, Bensalem is not a Christian Republic. Bensalem's pursuit of science, then, precedes the island's adherence to the Christian God. For the first three hundred years during which members of the House of Salomon travel abroad and study God's works and the works of nature, they are not Christian. That being said, the governor-priest has yet to answer the sailor's question; still to be explained is the manner in which Bensalem obtains her extensive knowledge of the rest of the world, while herself remaining unknown.

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[82] When the narrator addresses the crew upon their internment in the Strangers' House, he too calls the mariners his "dear friends" (43).

[83] 1 Kings 4:29; Hebrews 5:9.

[84] Proverbs 25:3.

After this brief, albeit necessary, digression, they "now come to [their] present purpose" (58). The single exception permitting international travel applies to the House of Salomon. Every twelve years, two Bensalemite ships depart from the island. Making clear that these are not military ships, the governor-priest states that they contain "victuals, and a good quantity of treasure" for the use of the Brethren. In each "of these ships there should be a mission of three Fellows or Brethren of Salomon's House." Mandated "to give…knowledge of the affairs and state of those countries to which they were designed" (59), these men are allowed periodically to leave Bensalem. Once abroad, they are to survey "the sciences, arts, manufacturing, and inventions of all the world; and withal to bring unto [the island] books, instruments, and patterns in every kind." Intellectual reconnaissance is the express purpose of these exceptional voyages; on this point, the governor-priest is clear. Bensalem is concerned with the "affairs and state of those countries to which they were designed." While exploration is the primary purpose of these journeys, there are two instances of direct interference in the outside world, both of which are under the discretion of the Brethren: first, they may purchase goods to bring home; and second, they may reward any "persons as they should think fit." In this way, Bensalem, by proffering rewards, may direct science, arts, manufacturing, and invention throughout the world.

Thus, the prohibition against international travel excludes at least six Brethren of the House of Salomon, who remain abroad for a period of twelve years. Practical details regarding these sojourns, of interest to the sailors and likely to the reader, are not revealed. The voyages are intended as covert missions of intelligence reconnaissance:

> Now for me to tell how the vulgar sort of the mariners are contained from being discovered at land; and how they that must be put on for any time, colour themselves under the names of other nations; and to what places these voyages have been designed; and to what places of *rendez-vous* are appointed for the new missions; and like circumstances of the practique; I may not do it: neither is it much to your desire (59).

Particulars of this process—those specifics explaining the manner by which Bensalemite travelers remain unknown—are never revealed. Essentially, the Brethren disguise themselves, assume the identities of other nations, speak indigenous languages, and live in foreign countries unbeknownst to the local inhabitants of those countries. Although the governor-priest states that he cannot reveal the details of this espionage, nor need the sailors know, it does seem a very important and curious point. Uninvited and unknown, Bensalem, as a matter of policy, is spying on the rest of the world. Endowed with a "good quantity of treasure," the Brethren are able to "buy such things" that they require, as well as those things that they select to bring back to the island, and in addition support those foreign endeavors that they deem worthy by the "rewarding of such persons as they should think fit." As the governor-priest admits, Bensalem is an anonymous patron of the pursuit of knowledge: "thus you see we maintain a trade, not for gold, silver, or jewels; nor for silks; nor for spices; nor any other commodity of matter; but only for God's first creature, which was *Light*; to have *light* (I say) of the growth of all parts of the world."

Silenced and astonished, as the governor-priest has predicted, the sailors cannot believe they "hear[d] so strange things so probably told" (59). Despite being astounded, the sailors do not ask the governor-priest any additional questions or for points of clarification. Instead, the governor-priest, for the first time, "descend[s]" to ask the sailors about their voyage. It is clear that the narrator regards the turn in the conversation, from matters pertaining to Bensalem to matters pertaining to the sailors, is a "descent." Nothing is relayed about the governor-priest's specific questions, or the sailors' answers. Prior to taking his leave, the governor-priest again encourages the sailors to consider their futures. He assures them that any amount of time they desire to remain on the island is to be accommodated, "for he would procure such time as [they] desired" (60). As an acknowledgement of the governor-priest, the sailors, who have been sitting, rise and attempt to kiss his tippet, an action impermissible by the governor-priest. On that note, the conversation concludes, and the governor-priest departs.

Implications of the Governor-Priest's Speeches

Following the three days that the sailors have spent with the governor-priest, they take themselves "for free men" (60). They believe themselves free since they no longer see "danger of [their] utter perdition." There are two clear reasons for the sailors' altered circumstances: first, they have been granted permission to explore the city; and second, they have been informed, by the governor-priest, of the history of the island. While the governor-priest does not indicate explicitly that details have been omitted from his account of the conversion, he does admit that he is legally bound to "reserve some particulars" (51) about Bensalemite policy. That being said, the governor-priest, in spite of his reticence, determines that "there will be enough to give [the sailors] satisfaction." His assessment seems to be correct. His speeches, and the content disclosed by his speeches, have affected the sailors: they no longer fear for their lives.[85]

It is not simply that the sailors are no longer trepidatious; they are joyous. Prior to their arrival on Bensalem, and perhaps even during their seclusion, the sailors have believed that they are condemned to die. In his speech to the sailors, the narrator makes much of the sailors' apparent condition. Upon being installed in the Strangers' House, the sailors are "between life and death…beyond the old world and the new" (43), and unsure of ever seeing Europe again. Now, they no longer are fearful for their immediate physical well-being, nor are they concerned with returning to Europe.[86]

Some of the sailors are even desirous to remain on Bensalem (60). In discussing the intentions of some of the sailors to remain on the island, the narrator subtly alludes to the rationale: it is the "conditions [the state offers] to strangers that would stay" (60). Evidence from exploring the city, the account of the miraculous conversion, the laws of secrecy, the institution of the Strangers' House, or the financial enticement may have been among the factors that motivate these sailors to immigrate. Despite repeated attempts on the part of the sailors to provide compensation, the islanders consistently refuse such gifts: the sailors believe that the Bensalemites receive "salary sufficient of the state" (41). Moreover, Solamona's reforms ensure that strangers who immigrate have "very good conditions and means to live from the state" (57). Accordingly, some of the mariners are willing to forego returning to their homelands, preferring instead to remain on the hospitable, Bensalemite shores.

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[85] Paterson provides two definitions of 'perdition:' "complete destruction or in a spiritual sense, and complete destruction or ruin in a mundane sense." Although he notes that "[t]he religious meaning is usually primary," he does not conclude in which case this statement applies to the sailors. Paterson, "Baconian Science" 144-47.

[86] Faulkner concludes that the sailors' sentiment pertaining to the island, "images forth the liberation of Christian Europe from Christianity and the insinuation of a promise of earthly ease in its stead." Faulkner 124.

Following their confinement and the governor-priest's account of the island, the sailors "lived most joyfully, going abroad and seeing what was to be seen in the city and places adjacent" (60). This newly acquired freedom of the sailors is not without limitations. Going abroad and exploring the city, they remain confined by the tether previously imposed by the governor-priest. In making note of the restriction on travel, that "'none of [the sailors] must go above a *karan*' (that is with them a mile and a half) 'from the walls of the city, without especial leave'" (45), the narrator seems to be reminding his readers that the account of Bensalem which he provides in the *New Atlantis* does not involve complete disclosure. At this point, the island, in its entirety, is not accessible to the sailors.[87]

Within the imposed area of exploration, the sailors begin "obtaining acquaintance with many of the city, not of the meanest quality" (60). In addition to "seeing what [i]s to be seen," the sailors begin forming relationships with the Bensalemites. The narrator, however, does note a distinction in the nature and quality of the islanders: in like manner to the sailors, some of whom are "of the meaner sort" (46), some of the Bensalemites also are of the "meanest quality" (60). By emphasizing this similarity among different types of men, the narrator seems to suggest that even on an island that appears as angelic as Bensalem, not all of the citizens are of the highest quality. However, the sailors' perceptions regarding the kindness of the Bensalemite officers whom they have met previously, are confirmed by those islanders with whom they are forming acquaintances and "at whose hands [they] f[i]nd such humanity and such a freedom and desire to take strangers as it were into their bosom."

Humanity, as a dominant characteristic of Bensalemites, has been emphasized by Bacon's narrator since their arrival upon the island.[88] When the sailors first receive the scroll prohibiting them from landing but offering aid, the narrator stresses the "humanity" of the island (39). Beginning with this initial association of Bensalem with humanity, emphasis of that quality has become a recurrent descriptor of these people and their behavior. Upon being administered their oath and then being granted the right to come ashore, the sailors equate the behavior of the "reverend man" to "singular humanity" (40). In his speech to the sailors, the narrator points to the "humanity" of the islanders as an example of the need for the sailors to behave appropriately (43). While conversing with the governor-priest, the sailors refer to his "rare humanity" towards them (50). Of the three times that the word 'humanity' is used by a Bensalemite, all are employed by the governor-priest as descriptors of the temperament of Solamona. During the second founding of Bensalem, Solamona remains concerned with "preserv[ing] all the points of humanity," while "desiring to join policy and humanity together" (57). The final occurrence of the term is in the present context. From the aforementioned references to "humanity" in the text, the narrator seems to be pointing to the relationship between Bensalem and human nature. The rare humanity of the island suggests that Bensalem is concerned with the expressions of the highest human characteristics.[89]

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[87] Price incorrectly states that following the governor-priest's speeches, "the mariners are allowed free access to Bensalem." Price 4.

[88] Innes discusses, in detail, the humanity of the islanders and the relationship between humanity and charity. Innes 10-14.

By emphasizing the humanity of the islanders, Bacon highlights the relationship between politics and human nature. Although Bensalem may not be the ideal state, it is unlikely Bacon believes that any political organization is capable of perfection. However, it seems that on this island, the humanity, or the highest parts of man, are consciously cultivated. As such, good behavior and the manifestation of one's highest faculties are inseparable.

Concern with 'humanity' is manifest not only in official institutions, such as the Strangers' House, but also by the Bensalemites in general. It has been thirty-seven years since outsiders have been permitted to stay in the Strangers' House; one is thus led to believe that it also has been thirty-seven years since strangers have been permitted to interact with the Bensalemites (45). The apparent disinterest which the citizens exhibit when the sailors first disembark (41), may be a manifestation of the islanders' concern with humanity: it is rude to wonder at outsiders. Bensalemite hospitality, as previously suggested, has caused the sailors to "forget all that [i]s dear to [them] in [their] own countries" (60). Solamona's policy, of encouraging strangers to remain on the island (57), seems to be working nineteen hundred years later. These sailors, previously concerned that they might never see Europe again (43), are slowly replacing their longing to return home with a desire to remain upon Bensalem.

If one returns to the previous consideration of Psalm 137, perhaps the sailors' quotation from the Psalm is not as strange as previously appears. Having been granted permission to remain on Bensalem for forty-two days, the sailors graciously respond that their "tongues should first cleave to the roofs of [their] mouths, ere [they] should forget either this reverend person or this whole nation in [their] prayers" (45). When the Psalm is first discussed, a concern was voiced regarding the content and intention of its inclusion. At that time, it was unclear whether or not the sailors intended to remember their own homeland, or Bensalem. Based on the events that have transpired since the sailors first voice their gratitude, it appears that, in their prayers, Bensalem indeed has replaced their places of birth. They are no longer concerned with returning to Europe, but are focused on learning about, and remaining upon, Bensalem.

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[89] The emphasis on humanity may be a subtle endorsement of Humanism, and the precept that man not God is the measure.

Considerations on the Governor-priest's Speeches and their Impact Upon the Sailors

Upon learning that Bensalem "offers conditions to strangers that would stay" (60), many of the sailors are desirous to remain upon the island. With such strong intentions on the part of some of the sailors, the narrator and other unidentified crew members have difficulty ensuring that the sailors continue to repair their ship and restraining them from "going presently to the governor to crave conditions." If the sailors choose to remain, the decision must be a collective one. Despite their enthusiasm, the precise conditions provided by the state to sailors who remain is yet unclear. Following the governor-priest's speeches, the sailors now take themselves "for free men." Although no reflection on the island is related by the narrator, the reader is compelled to reconsider the events that have transpired over the course of the previous three days: what has been revealed in the governor-priest's speeches that requires clarification, and what has been said that serves as an impetus for the sailors to remain on this island? Looking at the governor-priest's account in historical order sheds light on the development of the island. Evidently, the governor-priest's account of the island has not been chronological: chronologically, the first event which occurs is the war with Coya and the resultant destruction of Atlantis; the second is the inception of Salomon's House; and the last is the advent of Christianity.

Pertinent in the governor-priest's account of Bensalem's war with Coya is that both countries have been international nautical powers. In order to accept this account, one must reconsider the development of seafaring. No longer remembered, the world previously has been far more advanced than originally believed. Being an advanced civilization does not preclude the possibilities of epic disasters which can cause a total upheaval in technological capabilities. Cyclical destruction and reconstruction of the world is recurring. This theme is much discussed in the *Timaeus*:

> At any given time…after a span of years…the heavenly stream comes back again like a plague to sweep your people away, and leaves only the illiterate and uneducated among

> you, so that all over again from the beginning, you become young, as it were, knowing nothing either of things here or of whatever was in your own land in olden times.[90]

As in the case of Bacon's Atlantis, forgetting the past is a result of the preoccupation to fulfill basic necessities. If a great international civilization can be destroyed and forgotten, the governor-priest, intentionally or perhaps unintentionally, seems to be issuing a warning. Atlantis, a great and flourishing power, is obliterated; is it not then possible that the contemporary world can also be destroyed?

Moreover, if the missions are undertaken by Coya and Tyrambel, why was Atlantis destroyed? It is here that the concept of Atlantis as a single island entity may be ill-conceived. According to the Platonic account in the *Timaeus*, Atlantis is an empire, not a single island:

> And on this very island of Atlantis there was gathered a great and wondrous power of kings, which mastered the entire island, many other islands, and even parts of the continent; and in addition to these, they further rule over the lands here within Libya as far as Egypt, and over Europe as far as Tuscany.[91]

Coya and Tyrambel, both countries in the Americas, may have been part of the Atlantan Empire. Based on this understanding, Coya, Tyrambel, and Atlantis comprise a unified political federation. The destruction of Atlantis, by "Divine Revenge" (54), devastates the entire continent. If this is indeed the case, the impact on trade must have been substantial. Not a single power, but Atlantis and her entire empire is destroyed.

It is strange, however, that Bensalem does not choose to assist in rebuilding the trade network. For an undisclosed reason, Bensalem allows the rest of the world to forget its history and descend into a less adept age. Even the Egyptian account from Solon, the only account available to the rest of the world, is not complete. How might this have been a viable policy? The reduction in visitation to the island can be seen, in part, as a policy of non-interference by Bensalem. Bensalem chooses to do nothing.

Despite the haphazard state of the rest of the world, Bensalem at that time was flourishing. Over a thousand years later, Solamona comes to the throne. As mentioned, all of the factors necessary to become self-sufficient are available to the island: nautically, her power remains as strong as before the decrease in traffic; agriculturally, there is a "rare fertility of soil" (56); and economically, the island is "sufficient and substantial [enough…] to maintain itself without any aid at all of the foreigner." Given these factors, Bensalem has become a lone, advanced nation. This, however, is insufficient to account for the policy.

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[90] Plato, *Timaeus* 23ab.

[91] Ibid. 24e-25a

Returning to an earlier question—what did Solamona foresee—two answers seem clear: Solamona feared Bensalem's potential regression as a result of the commixing of manners, and he feared Bensalem's desire to interfere in the trajectory of the rest of the world. Were Bensalem to have chosen to remain known, Bensalemites may have faced an ethical dilemma: if the rest of the world is in decay, is it their responsibility to help prevent the process? Solamona solved this problem by sending Brethren into the outside world so that Bensalem would be able to direct the redevelopment without incurring negative effects. Funding suitable individuals and intellectual projects allows for covert interference without being pestered for further assistance (59). Perhaps Solamona believed that a radical reconstruction was required to begin anew in a less violent manner. Regardless of the rationale behind the policy of isolation, the rest of the world forgets the past, and sets about on a new path.

Solamona does not, however, allow Bensalem to suffer the same fate as the rest of the world. By instituting the House of Salomon, Solamona codifies intellectual development into the framework of the Bensalemite state.[92] Pursuing knowledge as policy is overtly stated in the House's mandate: "finding out the true nature of all things, (whereby God might have the more glory in the workmanship of them, and men the more fruit in the use of them)" (58). This twofold directive points to the need for productive knowledge. It is insufficient for human purposes simply to understand nature; one must also be able to manipulate nature. Further evinced by the mandate of the House is the focus on honor. Whereas the rest of the world seems to seek honor through war, Bensalem bestows honors through knowledge.

The House of Salomon seems inseparable from God. According to Scripture, it is God who has created all natural things, and thus in order to honor God, men must learn about His works. The pursuit of knowledge about nature, as a state policy, predates the island's conversion to Christianity. Further, Bensalem's covert international operations also predate Christianity. Bensalem is not an irreligious island. But to what religion do the pre-Christian Bensalemites adhere? Ample textual evidence seems to suggest a Hebraic origin.[93] Even before the account of the conversion, a number of details point to this possibility. First, the insignia of the island is a cherub, a sign of Old Testament religiosity (39). Second, one of the languages of communication in the scroll is ancient Hebrew (38). Third, in administering the oath of Christianity, the reverend man "lifted up his right hand towards heaven, and drew it softly to his mouth, (...the gesture they use when they thank God)" (40), which appears to mimic the gesture used by Jews when they use when they thank God)" (40), which appears to mimic the gesture used by Jews when they walk through doorways to the temple or their homes.[94] Fourth, as discussed previously in this thesis, administering oaths to God is deemed acceptable in the Old Testament, while it is condemned in the New Testament (40).

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[92] This becomes far more apparent with the Father of the House of Salomon's speech, discussed in the seventh chapter of this thesis.

[93] Weinberger, "Miracles" 111.

In the account of the conversion, the wise man who mediates the event seems to have Jewish origins. As discussed, the miracle is described in Old Testament language and imagery. The pillar of light is an overtly Old Testament symbol for the presence of God (47). Moreover, the content of the wise man's prayer seems to suggests that the God to whom he prays not only is monotheistic, but also is the creative God of the Old Testament (48). That Bensalem has been chosen, by the "Finger" of God, echoes the covenants between the Old Testament God and Abraham, Noah, and Moses respectively. Therefore, if Bensalem is originally a Jewish state, what is the need for the conversion?[95]

From the governor-priest's account, it is clear that Bensalem is a unique and enigmatic nation. The sailors' original assertion that it is worthy of study has proven true. Even at this preliminary point in the *New Atlantis*, Bacon has created an island with a multitude of unimaginable possibilities. The full extent of Bensalem's uniqueness remains to be seen and explored. However, throughout the rest of the account, one must keep in mind the complications that already have been raised, and remember to question all aspects of the island.

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[94] See chapter two of this thesis, footnote 23.

[95] According to Paterson, "examination of the chronology of Bensalem shows that Baconian science was established there almost three hundred years *prior* to the arrival of Christianity, and hence must have roots quite independent of faith." Paterson, "Role of Christianity" 429, 438-42.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE FEAST OF THE FAMILY

Proceeding from the sailors' newfound freedom and their burgeoning acquaintance with the islanders, the narrator declares that "if there be a mirror in the world worthy to hold men's eyes, it is that country" (60).[1] In positing such a claim, the narrator reiterates his previous statement: "there is no worldly thing on earth more worthy to be known than the state of that happy land" (46). It is important to remember that mirrors do not depict an object as it is; at the very least, a mirror representation is an inverted image. There are three ways in which to understand the comparison of Bensalem to a mirror for men's eyes: first, that Bensalem, both her policies and her people, reflect mankind at its highest—that this island most accurately reveals human excellence; second, that Bensalem is a distortion of human excellence—that this island reveals a perversion of man; and third, that Bensalem reflects a part of mankind—that this island is an accurate depiction of certain aspects of human nature, but not human nature entirely.

Of the "many things right worthy of observation and relation" (60), one is featured for elaboration by the narrator. The single 'thing' that embodies Bensalem's worth is a domestic ritual—the Feast of the Family. This is the first event relayed in the text at which some of the sailors are present, but the narrator is not.[2] Having been in attendance at all of the previous conversations between the sailors and the Bensalemites—those that transpired on the ship, those during the first viewing of the Strangers' House, and those with the governor-priest—the narrator is now relating an event to which he has not been invited; he has been told of this ritual by two unidentified crewmen and now is relaying their account. Since the narrator is absent from the ritual, the reader is led to question both the authenticity and importance of the account: why does the narrator choose to discuss this Feast, and how is this ritual the epitome of *goodness*?

Having been educated regarding the House of Salomon and the laws of secrecy, an intriguing institution and a unique policy respectively, one is apt to consider the Feast of the Family a matter of household policy and, as such, of little importance to the study of this state. Since family is the smallest and most fundamental unit of a state, Bacon, in agreement with Aristotle, encourages a careful study of matters of domestic organization:

> So it cometh often to pass, that mean and small things discover great, better than great can discover the small: and therefore Aristotle noteth well, *That the nature of everything is best seen in his smallest portions*. And for that cause he inquireth the nature of a

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[1] In *The Advancement of Learning*, Bacon likens man's mind to a mirror: "God hath framed the mind of man as a mirror or a glass." Bacon, *Advancement* I.i.3.

[2] I disagree with Price's suggestion that, in fact, it is "unclear as to whether [the narrator] has first-hand experience of the Feast of the Family's rituals." Price 13.

> commonwealth, first in a family, and the simple conjugations of man and wife, parent and child, master and servant, which are in every cottage. Even so likewise the nature of this great city of the world, and the policy thereof, must be first sought in mean concordances and small portions.[3]

As discussed in *The Advancement of Learning*, it is often in those things which are smaller that one is more able to see that which is essential than in those things which are larger. Thus, matters of political study often begin with the smallest unit of the state: the family. Inquiry into the nature of this Feast of the Family, then, is essential in coming to understand the Bensalemite state. Presented here with a familial ritual, one must consider this rite, first in relation to the family and then in relation to the state.

Prior to discussing the ritualistic details of the Feast, the narrator informs readers of the *New Atlantis* of his interpretation of the ritual; according to the narrator's judgment, this is a "most natural, pious, and reverend custom" (60).[4] Based on this tripartite assessment, the Feast manifests the humanity of the island which has been highlighted throughout the narrator's discussion thus far:[5] presumably, the narrator intends to evoke the connection between human nature and the nature of familial relationships; this Feast is also deemed pious and thus has religious overtones; further, as a result of the ritual's alleged naturalness and piety, it is worthy of great respect. More so than any of the 'things' which the sailors have witnessed on Bensalem, this Feast is commendable. Indeed, the narrator posits that the Feast of the Family "shew[s] that nation to be compounded of all goodness" (60).

Designed to honor patriarchs, the Feast of the Family not only is state sanctioned, but also "is done at the cost of the state" (60). Since Bensalem defrays the cost of the Feast, it cannot be considered as simply a household rite; rather, it is a civic ritual. Once granted this honor, a father is bestowed with a new title, Tirsan.[6] Tirsans, then, are an identifiable group of individuals within Bensalem, who are thus united and distinguished by their common appellation. Specific criteria exist in order for a father to become a Tirsan: first, he must be living; second, he must have thirty living descendants; and last, all of his descendants, at least those who comprise the thirty, must be above the age of three. Close consideration of these three conditions for the Feast sheds light on the requirements for this honor and thus on the island.

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[3] Bacon, *Advancement* II.i.5.

[4] For a detailed consideration of the Feast of the Family, specifically its Persian and Egyptian origins, see White 167-79; Innes seems to follow White in suggesting that the Tirsan Feast has overtones of a fertility ritual. Innes 21-22.

[5] See chapter four of this thesis, "Considerations on the Governor-Priest's Speeches and their Impact upon the Sailors."

[6] According to Weinberger, *Tirsan* is derived from the "Persian word (tarsan) meaning timid or fearful." Weinberger, *New Atlantis* 61, fn. 171; also see Weinberger, "Miracles" 107. There are a number of additional etymological possibilities from which the name of this patriarch may be derived: *Tiras*, a biblical term, meaning corn or wheat; *Tirats*, the future tense of the Hebrew verb *rotseh*, meaning to want or to strive for; *Tirosh*, a biblical term, meaning grape juice or wine; *Teerash*, a biblical word from the word *yarash*, meaning inheritance; *Tirzah*, a biblical name meaning pleasant or favorable, belonging to Zelophed's daughter who is discussed in relation to laws of female inheritance (Numbers 26:33, 36:11;

Why is the age of three significant? Children who reach the age of three have become increasingly self-sufficient; not only are three-year-olds no longer entirely dependent on their parents, but the danger of infant death also decreases by that age. According to biblical sources, a boy, like a plant, reaches proper maturation at three years.[7] Pruning a tree, or cutting a child's hair before he reaches the age of three, is ill-advised and is believed to cause future ailments. It is also noteworthy that, at the age of three, orthodox Jewish boys begin studying the Torah. Three years, then, marks the beginning of a child's physical and intellectual maturation.[8]

Less clear, however, is the relationship between the Tirsan and his thirty descendants. This confusion is derived from Bacon's diction in this passage: "persons descended of his body" (60). How do the Bensalemites understand descendants? Two possible interpretations exist: first, that these descendants comprise the extended family of the Tirsan—his children, his grandchildren, his great-grandchildren, and even his great-great-grandchildren; and second, that these thirty descendants are the immediate offspring of the Tirsan—his own children. Based on the former calculation, having thirty descendants is not a feat worthy of particular mention; if, for example, the Tirsan has fathered five children, each of whom produces five offspring, then he has thirty descendants. In this case, a patriarch is thus understood to have a responsibility not only for his immediate offspring, but also to their offspring. Drawing from this understanding of descendants, a Bensalemite family is not simply a nuclear family; rather, family includes an extended network of relatives. If this is indeed the case, then this is not an infrequent ritual, and the number of Bensalemite Tirsans is likely extensive. Based on the aforementioned

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Joshua 17:3); and *Tiras*, a biblical name meaning desire, belonging to Noah's grandson (Genesis 10:2; Chronicles 1:5). Based on the multiplicity of possible Hebraic origins for the term "tirsan," Bacon's readers hastily must not assume that this Feast of the Family honors timid and fearful men. My thanks to Tobin Craig for his help in compiling this list.

[7] Deuteronomy 20:19; and Leviticus 19:23, 27.

[8] In commemoration of this transitional period, three-year-old orthodox Jewish boys have their hair cut for the first time. In Yiddish, this ritualistic sheering is called *upsherin* (Yiddish for 'shear off'). Following the cutting of a child's hair, only the ear locks are left intact. For orthodox Jewish boys, the *upsherin* marks the beginning of the child's study of Torah, and thus the initiation into the intellectual tradition of his community. Also see Matthew 2:16, wherein King Harod slaughtered all of the children under three years.

interpretation of descendants, the Feast of the Family is similar to a modern honor for fathers: Father's Day.[9]

Alternately, thirty descendants may refer to the immediate offspring of one man. First, given the technology available during the seventeenth century, one presumes that these children are born naturally; they are not the result of adoption, artificial insemination, surrogacy, or any other technological interference.[10] That being said, there is always the possibility of multiple births—twins, triplets, or quadruplets, et cetera. A man is physiologically capable of fathering offspring well into his old age.[11] Further, a man, once he has inseminated a woman, is free to father another child at any time; men are able to have multiple children, with multiple women concurrently. In contrast, females are capable of giving birth approximately once every year. Given that female fertility lasts between thirty-five and forty years, it is possible, albeit highly unlikely, for a woman to birth thirty children. If descendants are understood as the immediate offspring of a Tirsan, then one is led to question the nature of Bensalemite marriages. Two obvious questions emerge: first, what is the Bensalemite understanding of descendants? And second, what is the Bensalemite understanding of marriage?

A review of the narrator's description of the festival does not add clarity to the definition of descendants. The narrator stipulates four different designations for members of the family: "all the persons of the family" (61); the "descendants" (63, 64, cf. 60); "all his generations or lineage" (62); and "children" (63), which includes his "sons" (61, 63, 64) and "daughters" (62, 64). In his description of the Feast, the narrator sometimes refers to the "sons" and "daughters" of the Tirsan, at other times to the "descendants" of the Tirsan, and once each to "all the persons of the family" and "all the lineage." However, what is the relationship between these four terms? Are they all synonymous? Or, are "descendants" and "lineage" synonyms, while "sons" and "daughters" refer to the immediate offspring of the Tirsan? "All the persons of the family" is the least obscure term used; "all the persons of the family" refers to all of the members of the family, including the father, the mother, the children, the grandchildren, the great-grandchildren, the great-great-grandchildren, and perhaps even aunts, uncles, and cousins. This, however, does not answer the current question, but rather returns us to a consideration of the other three terms. "All the lineage," which is used only once in discussing the initial entrance of the Tirsan into the hall, seems to be synonymous with "descendants." The term "descendants" is used in discussing the requirements for the honor, having "thirty persons descended of his body;" it is also used to refer to the number of grapes in the ceremonial cluster which represents the number of "descendants of the family." In describing the dinner, the narrator tells us that the Tirsan sits alone: "none of his descendants sit with him." Also, all of the descendants are blessed by the father. On the other hand, sons and daughters seem to be distinguished from the descendants: one son is chosen to live with his father; two sons support their father while he stands; "his own children, such as are male," serve their father dinner; and two eminent sons are given special recognition. The daughters are acknowledged for having decorated the dais. Although a distinction may exist between the descendants and the Tirsan's own children, such delineation is inconclusive. One important point may be gleaned from this consideration: if the daughters of the Tirsan are responsible for having decorated the dais, it is unlikely the work of a handful of women; given the magnitude of the task, it is unlikely that the Tirsan's daughters neglect their own families to complete the Feast's decorations. As such, given the odd locution, the likely, albeit inconclusive, reading is that descendants means sons and daughters. In order to recognize the ritualistic importance of this honor, the Tirsan must be understood to have directly fathered thirty offspring.

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[9] If the aforementioned interpretation of the Tirsan's thirty descendants is correct, the reader is left to wonder about the population of Bensalem. How may Bensalemites are there?

[10] White argues that "The Feast of the Tirsan, the great family festival, depends partly on the triumphs of medicine." White 148.

[11] Assuming that a male begins procreating at twenty-five years old, the age "when he passes his swiftest prime for running," and refrains at fifty-five, he has thirty years of fertility. Plato, *Republic* 460e.

Being alive is the first requirement for being the honoree at the Feast of the Family: this is not a posthumous ritual. In order for the full manner of the Feast to be completed, the Tirsan must be able to interact with and judge his offspring. Further, in order to be granted this honor and actually accrue the resultant benefits, the father must be in attendance at the Feast.

This festival spans a three-day period: the first two days are spent "in consultation concerning the good estate of the family" (61), and, therefore, it is unlikely that any of the sailors are present for this portion of the Feast; the final day involves the actual ritual, to which two of the sailors have been invited. In relating the "full order of that feast" (64), the narrator claims, despite his absence, to ensure an accurate and comprehensive account of this ritual which provides a forum in which to address matters of familial stability, constancy, and sociability.

The First Two Days: Consultations with the Family

Two days prior to the Feast, the Tirsan, three friends of his choice, the governor of the city, and "all persons of the family, of both sexes" (61) gather. Ostensibly, the purpose of this family assembly is to meet "in consultation concerning the good estate of the family." Decisions regarding the future course of the family are not made solely by the father; he is assisted by three of his friends and the governor of the city. No explicit explanation is provided for the presence of the Tirsan's three friends. Although Bacon's narrator does not elucidate this matter, it seems that the Tirsan's friends support and assist him in his decision making. Since the Tirsan's friends do not receive any benefits from the Feast, they presumably are impartial advisors who, having the Tirsan's interests in mind, unlikely are to be swayed by an attachment to a particular child.

State representation is provided by the "governor of the city or place where the Feast is celebrated" (61). The governor lends not only an official air to the proceedings, but also authority, "though that seldom needeth;" throughout the ritual and following the consultations, the "governor assisteth, to the end to put in execution by his public authority the decrees and orders of the Tirsan, if they should be disobeyed." First recourse is to the authority of the family. Only once the family has unsuccessfully implemented or enforced the decrees of the Tirsan does the state intervene. Therefore, the state, based on the governor's aforementioned role, supports the choices made in families and respects the sanctity of such decisions. In this regard, this is an instance where the difference between thirty children and thirty descendants is crucial: if the Bensalemite family is understood as an extended family, then the Tirsan, through the enactment of his decrees, as a grandfather, great-grandfather, or great-great-grandfather, subjugates his children's abilities to parent their own children—the role of fathers, then, is superceded by that of the Tirsan; however, if this is understood as a nuclear family, then the family is subject to the Tirsan—a father, then, has complete control over the course his immediate family takes. As before, the logical conclusion, if domestic order is maintained, points to descendants as the biological children of the Tirsan. Bestowing "reverence and obedience…to the order of nature," according to the Bensalemites, entails bestowing reverence and obedience to the order of the family, since the family accords with nature.

In addition to the three men of the Tirsan's choosing and the state representative, "all the persons of the family, of both sexes, are summoned to attend to him" (61). Depending on the interpretation of "descendants" that one adopts, the Tirsan's familial entourage may be either thirty people, or a significantly higher number. Although not yet mentioned but of later import, one presumes that the wife, or wives, of the Tirsan are also present, assuming they are considered "persons of the family." Gathering to consider "the good estate of the family," the two days prior to the Feast provide a forum in which to discuss sensitive family issues.

Ensuring the well-being of a Bensalemite family, according to the narrator's analysis, involves consultations regarding the immediate concerns and future needs of the family: first, to appease discord within the family, such as sibling rivalry; second, to relieve the distressed or decayed members of the family, presumably by providing monetary help for those in need; third, to reprove or censure those who are subject to vice or have taken an ill course, such as those who exhibit poor judgment and bad behavior; and fourth, to ensure issues of future pertinence, such as marriages, employment, and childrearing. Appeasing discord within the family is the first order of business. In order to resolve issues of future significance, internal disputes first must be ameliorated. Of note is that these angelic islanders are not perfect; some of them are of "the meanest quality" (60). They too have family disputes; some of them are "distressed or decayed," while others are "subject to vice, or [have] take[n] ill courses" (61). Bensalemites, like Bacon's sailors, are subject to indiscretions. Passing mention is made of one specific honor upon which the narrator later elaborates: the Tirsan chooses one son "to live in house with him: who is called ever after the Son of the Vine." Thus, it becomes clear that one purpose of the two days of deliberation is to ensure the future good of the Tirsan and of his family.

When the details of the deliberations are considered, it becomes evident that the Tirsan is making arrangements for both the relief of his old age, and his eventual death. This festival may be attempting to circumvent the disorder that arises when one does not organize one's affairs, and thus the complications that arise when a parent lacks foresight. In light of the squabbles, inequities, and frustrations that often develop when a patriarch dies, the Bensalemites, by means of this ritual, have attempted to avoid such domestic problems.

The Third Day: The Feast

On the third day, the Feast takes place. Ornately decorated, the "large room where the feast is celebrated" (61) has been bedecked for the occasion. With the exception of the description of the "gilt" boat (39), this is the first mention of adornment in the text. Sitting upon a half-pace, the Tirsan is situated as a monarch before his subjects. Displaying the talents "of some of the daughters of the family," the embellished hanging over the Tirsan's chair is their work:

> the state is curiously wrought with silver and silk of divers colours, broiding or binding in the ivy; and is ever of the work of some of the daughters of the family; and is veiled over at the top with a fine net of silk and silver. (61)

The ivy serves as a commemorative of the Feast, "whereof, after it is taken down, the friends of the family are desirous to have some leaf or sprig to keep" (62). As if a presage of good, the ivy is taken home by those who are in attendance, as a remembrance of the Feast: the governor, the three friends, the Tirsan's wife, his children, his extended family, his guests, and in this case the two sailors. While the consultations on the future of the family are private, the Feast is a public event. Throughout the Feast, according to the narrator, the guests are "well kept and without disorder." Despite being attended by many people, this event is well-organized, and those in attendance are respectfully behaved. This description of the company at the Feast echoes the narrator's previous description of the Bensalemites' behavior when the sailors first come ashore: "there were gathered some people on both sides [of the street] standing in a row; but in so civil a fashion" (41). Based on the description of the locals at both the Feast and in the street, the islanders seem an orderly people, not simply while on display for strangers, but also amongst themselves.

i. The Mother

Prior to this point in the narrator's account of the Feast, no mention has been made of the mother of the Tirsan's children. Notable by her absence, readers of the *New Atlantis* might rightly assume that the Feast of the Family honors fathers. While the mother does not partake in the ritualistic aspects of the Feast, she is present for the ceremony:

> if there be a mother from whose body the whole lineage is descended, there is a traverse placed in a loft above on the right hand of the chair, with a privy door, and a carved window of glass, leaded with gold and blue; where she sitteth, but is not seen. (62)

If one mother has given birth to all thirty descendants, she sits above and to the right of the Tirsan. Suspended from the roof in a box, the mother is able to see and hear the Feast, while herself remaining unseen and unheard. How is one to interpret the role of the mother in this festival, and in the Bensalemite family?

To begin, one must closely consider the narrator's words: "if there be a mother" (62). Only if there is a mother who has given birth to thirty descendants is she placed in the traverse. Given the complications that arise during pregnancy, the difficulty of childbirth, and infant mortality rates in the seventeenth century, it seems unlikely that there is one mother from whom all thirty children have descended. However, if the Bensalemites interpret thirty descendants as the Tirsan's extended family, it is possible, and even likely, for a mother to be present. Noteworthy in the narrator's account is the fact that it is the mother of the Tirsan's descendants, rather than a wife, who is placed in the traverse. That being said, the narrator does not indicate that there is a mother at this particular Feast.[12]

Insofar as the ritual accommodation for such a mother has been outlined elaborately, we may presume such a contingency is required, which brings us to an important question: why is the mother removed from the action of the ceremony? Pertinent to this consideration, is the distinction between the private and public realm. All those events that occur in the home are deemed private and the domain of the mother, while all those events that occur outside the home are deemed public and the domain of the father. If there is a mother, she is located "above and on the right hand of the chair" (62) in which the Tirsan sits. Physically, then, the mother sits on-high, above the father, her descendants, the governor of the city, the Tirsan's three friends, and all of the guests. While the patriarch appears to be enthroned as king over the guests, the matriarch seems to be the queen above the king. Moreover, the traverse is ornately decorated; there is "a carved window of glass, leaded with gold and blue." The traverse of the mother seems gaudier than the dais of the father: his chair is "wrought with silver and silk" (61), while her traverse is "leaded with gold and blue" (62). Although the mother is removed from the ceremony and unseen, she is placed in a revered position, as if in a gilded house. However, since this event is a public honor, the public face of the family, the father, presides over the event.

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[12] There are two issues on which the narrator remains silent: first, regarding the issue of bigamy and polygamy, no mention is made of the role that a second or third wife has in this Feast; and second, the protocol for the wife of a widower who has remarried is not discussed.

ii. The Three Parts of the Feast

The Feast is divided into three distinct parts: first, entrances and introductions; second, dinner and hymns; and last, blessings and birthrights. Having begun the day by offering "divine service" in private, the contents of which are never revealed, the Tirsan is prepared to enter the ornately decorated Feast room for the first time (61). In formal procession, entering the room "with all his generation or lineage, the males before him, and the females following him," the Tirsan is escorted to his chair atop the dais, while the "lineage place themselves against the wall…in order of their years without difference in sex" (62). Surrounded by his offspring, the Tirsan sits, enthroned in his chair, as his offspring stand. Entrances having been completed, the introductions commence.

From the far end of the room, a herald, which they call a taratan in their language, flanked by "two young lads," enters (62). The herald represents the Bensalemite King; it is he who presents the King's charter. In honor of the Tirsan, the King bequeaths a "gift of revenew, and many privileges, exemptions, and points of honour, granted to the Father of the Family." Being a Tirsan is accompanied by a number of benefits: there are monetary gifts; special rights, presumably of a legal nature; exemptions from certain duties and obligations; and renown. A Bensalemite idiom, "they say the king is debtor to no man, but for propagation of his subjects," applies to the Tirsan: the King is indebted to him for breeding. Not all Tirsans, however, receive the same benefits; "they are varied by discretion, according to the number and dignity of the family." Presumably, more respectable families, those who are "not of the meanest sort" (60), are subject to greater benefits: increased monetary compensation, additional special rights, freedom from additional duties and obligations, and additional renown. The criteria by which Bensalem determines the dignity of the family is unclear; profession and affiliation to the House of Salomon are two measures that appear to establish hierarchy on the island. Although the specifics of these benefits are unclear, the Bensalemites distinguish amongst Tirsans. As such, the merit of a Tirsan is based not only on the fact that he has thirty living descendants, but also is considered in conjunction with other qualities.

The King's charter is embossed with an insignia. Unlike the seal which ornaments the scroll that the sailors receive when they first arrive in port, "a stamp with cherubins' wings, not spread but hanging downwards, and by them a cross" (39), the seal on the King's charter is different. In honor of the king, the "seal set to the king's charter is the king's image, imbossed or moulded in gold" (63).[13] Unique to this situation, the charter is addressed "*To such an one our well-beloved friend and creditor.*" On Bensalem, one of the duties of the king is to ensure that his subjects procreate.

During the reading of the charter, "the father or Tirsan standeth up, supported by two of his sons, such as he chooseth" (63). In addition to the gifts outlined in the charter, the Tirsan is given two commemorative items. First, having read the charter aloud to those who are assembled, the herald mounts the half-pace and presents the charter to the Tirsan. Approvingly, all those present at the Feast, in acclamation, say in their language, "*Happy are the people of Bensalem.*" Given the solemnity of the ceremony, what has caused the people to be happy? There are a number of different ways to interpret the Bensalemites' happiness: first, they may be pleased by the procreation of the Tirsan; second, they may be happy to have their fecundity supported by the king; third, they may be happy that the Feast has progressed correctly; and fourth, they may be utilizing this occasion to ratify the goodness of the Bensalemite polity, as it is the means to their happiness.

The second gift represents the fertility of the Tirsan. The herald presents the Tirsan with a cluster of grapes. "[D]aintily enameled" (63), the grapes are painted "purple, with a little sun set in the top," if the majority of the Tirsan's children are males; however, "if the females [out number the males], then [the grapes] are enameled into a greenish yellow, with a little crescent set in the top."[14] In either case, "[t]he grapes are in number as many as there are descendents of the family." The Son of the Vine, an aforementioned honor bestowed by the Tirsan on one of his sons, is the keeper of this cluster.[15] For posterity, he has been chosen to live with his father and to "bea[r it] before his father as an ensign of honour" when they appear in public. Growing older, the father thus ensures that he always has one of his sons near at hand, to care for him in his old age. Unlike typical familial relationships of responsibility, the Son of the Vine need not be the eldest son. Merit, rather than primogeniture, determines which son is honored by this position. Since living in house with one's father and carrying the decorative cluster of grapes are time-consuming tasks, the Son of the Vine is probably an unmarried, childless son, or a younger son who is unlikely to marry before the Tirsan dies.[16] Once the Son of the Vine has been declared, the first portion of the Feast is complete, and the Tirsan retires.

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[13] Although it is presumptuous to draw any concrete conclusions, two things are evidenced by the two different seals: first, the island is a monarchy; and second, matters of civil concern and matters of international concern seems to rest under the auspices of different institutions. The king is responsible for Bensalemite subjects, while a different, undisclosed institution controls the interaction between Bensalem and strangers.

When the Tirsan returns, those assembled begin to dine. Sitting alone at a table, the Tirsan "is served only by his children, such as are male" (63). While the sons are attending to the needs of their father, "the women only stand about him, leaning against the wall." Although the Tirsan generally sits alone, an exception does exist: if any of his descendants "hap to be of Salomon's House," they are permitted to sit with their father. A number of aspects of the dinner remain unclear: first, why the father is served only by his sons; second, when the sons are permitted to eat dinner; third, if and when the daughters are permitted to eat; and fourth, whether any descendants who are members of the House of Salomon are served by their siblings and actually eat with their father, or merely share his table. None of these particular details are discussed by the narrator, and thus remain matters of speculation.[17]

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[14] The images enameled on the Tirsan's commemorative grapes are traditional symbols of fertility: the sun represents male fertility, while the crescent represents female fertility.

[15] For a brief consideration of the classical and biblical significance of grapes, see Simon 51-52.

[16] The role of the Son of the Vine admits of a number of complications. If a son dedicates his life to his father, does he then have to forego becoming a parent himself? While one assumes that the Tirsan is old and thus nearing death, the Son of the Vine may not be a long employment. However, if the Tirsan lives an additional twenty or thirty years, then the Son of the Vine is unlikely ever to become a Tirsan. While one assumes that becoming the Son of the Vine is an honor based on merit, given the limitations to which the Son of the Vine is subjected, his role seems more a matter of convenience for the Tirsan than an honor for the child.

[17] Extrapolating from the privileged position which descendants who are members of the House of Salomon are granted at the Feast of the Family, Paterson argues that "Bensalem must be dedicated to equality of education or opportunity, at least in the same limited sense in which, say, the Catholic Church attempted to ensure the entry into its ranks of bright children regardless of their parents' station in life, and probably more so." Paterson, "Baconian Science" 152.

Near "the end of dinner (which in the greatest Feasts with them lasteth never above an hour and a half) there is a hymn sung" (63). While the hymns are composed specifically for the purpose of this Feast, nevertheless "the subject of [the hymn] is (always) the praises of Adam and Noah and Abraham" (64) as well as Jesus. While variation is based on the creativity of the composer, content always remains the same; Adam and Noah "peopled the world, and [Abraham] was the father of the faithful: concluding ever with a thanksgiving for the nativity of our Saviour, in whose birth the births of all are only blessed." An examination of the mandatory content of the poems provides insight into this Feast and into the biblical understanding of the Bensalemites.

i. The Contents of the Hymns

Adam, although mentioned in the context of the Feast as simply "people[ing] the world" (64), is, according to the Old Testament, the first man created by God: "the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."[18] As a father does for his children, God arranges for the comforts of His creation. Following God's creation, man is placed in Eden, a garden which contains all those things man needs. Bacon discusses his understanding of Adam in another work, *The Advancement of Learning*. From Bacon's account, two factors concerning Adam become evident: first, Adam is born into paradise; and second, from the outset, work is natural. In this ideal and original condition, man's work is that of contemplation, the highest state. Man works for "exercise and experiment, not for necessity;" thus, "man's employment must of consequence have been matter of delight in experiment, and not a matter of labour for the use."[19] Adam labors because of his natural curiosity; he is driven by a desire to understand nature and to know the capabilities of nature.

Within the utopic garden, there is a single law: "of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat...for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."[20] Adam's wife, Eve, is well aware of the injunction against eating from the tree. Regardless, she is beguiled by a serpent, consumes the forbidden fruit, and entices Adam to do the same. Eve's indiscretion may provide a preliminary explanation for the reason the mother of the Tirsan's children is kept in a traverse during the Feast. Eve, the first woman, leads her husband astray. As a result, she is deemed responsible for the downfall of man and the birth of her children into a life of hardship. The private influence that women wield over their husbands is not for public display.

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[18] Genesis 2:7-8; this sentiment is later echoed by the Tirsan in blessing his children.

[19] Bacon, *Advancement* I.vi.6.

[20] Genesis 2:17.

Bacon suggests that upon eating from the tree, man obtains moral knowledge—knowledge of good and evil—not knowledge of the creatures.[21] As a result of his intellectual awakening, man oversteps the confines of human study and thus infringes on subjects of a divine nature. The House of Salomon, according to the governor-priest, does not study the psychology of the divine; rather, the House studies the "true nature of things" (58). Thus, plumbing the depths of natural knowledge is seen as distinct from delving into moral knowledge. While Adam falls victim to this misconception—namely, that all knowledge is open to human study—the Bensalemites seem to have learned from his example: there are those things a man can know, and there are those a man must not attempt to know.[22] Bacon suggests that in acquiring moral knowledge, man has undertaken "to make a total defection from God and to depend wholly upon himself."[23]

God reacts to Adam's disobedience by expelling him from the garden. Since Adam has presumed to know too much, he and his descendants no longer have a life of ease: God makes man mortal; man must till the soil; and, as a result, man no longer is free to pursue leisurely activities, but must labor to subsist. In order to ensure that Adam and Eve do not attempt to return to the garden from which they have been banished, a cherub is set to guard the gate. On the Bensalemite scroll which prohibits the ship from landing, there is a cherub (39). Is Bensalem being likened to the garden, inhabited by pre-fall Adams and Eves, or have the Bensalemites returned to paradise following the fall?

After their expulsion from the garden, Adam and Eve have two sons: Cain and Abel. These are the first children and the first brothers. "Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground."[24] To honor God, both brothers proffer sacrifices: Cain offers the fruits of the ground, while Abel, unlike his brother, offers the best of his flock. God honors Abel because Abel has honored him, whereas God's "wroth and his countenance fell" upon Cain. Sibling rivalry is thus born, resulting in the first fratricide: Cain, infuriated by the favor Abel finds with God, murders his brother.

In *The Advancement of Learning*, Bacon discusses these first sons, positing that Adam's offspring, Cain and Abel, represent the two states of man: action and contemplation, in the agrarian and the shepherd, respectively. Shepherding, "by reason of…leisure, rest in place, and living in view of heaven, is a lively image of the contemplative life."[25] God, in favoring Abel's gift, favors the contemplative above the active life. Although not mentioned by Bacon, herein pulsates a tension between the contemplative and the active life: while contemplation and action are brothers, action destroys contemplation. Despite the favor which Abel, as contemplator, has found with God, his brother, Cain, still kills him. Bacon seems to be pointing to the relationship between philosophy and politics, and the danger that an inhospitable regime poses to philosophic pursuits. Scripture records that following the murder, Cain, despite asking to die, is saved by God. Punished by a life in exile, Cain remains under divine protection. Adam and his wife, Eve, thus lose both their sons.[26] And yet, the genealogical line which the Bensalemites honor at this Feast—Noah, Abraham, and Jesus—is through another son of Adam: Seth. As Adam has been created in the image of God, Seth is created in the image of Adam. Seth, having been born in the image of his fallen father, is imperfect.

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[21] Bacon, *Advancement* I.vi.6.

[22] This seems to be another example of the warnings of Actaeon and Pentheus. See chapter four of this thesis, "Matters of Religion and Matters of Policy."

[23] Bacon, *Advancement* I.vi.6.

[24] Genesis 4:2.

Nine generations after Adam,[27] one of his descendants through his third son, Seth, finds favor with God. At this point, "God s[ees] that the wickedness of man [i]s great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart [i]s only evil continually."[28] Yet, despite the pervasive wickedness in men, there is a single man who, along with his family, is worth redeeming: "Noah f[i]nd[s] grace in the eyes of the Lord."[29] In order to exorcise the corruption and violence from the earth—that of both man and beast—God designs to eradicate all that which he has created, thereby beginning anew. To this end, God sends a flood upon the face of the earth. However, Noah and his family find grace in God's eyes, and He chooses to save them from His purging. On God's instruction, Noah constructs an ark which is intended to shelter those things which God desires to save from the pending deluge—Noah; his family; two of every unclean animal, one male and one female; and fourteen of every clean animal, seven male and seven female. It rains for forty days and forty nights, yet the earth remains submerged for one

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[25] Bacon, *Advancement* I.vi.7.

[26] Cain's offspring were artisans. Cain's great-great-great-grandson, Lemech, had three sons: Jabal, who "was the father of all those who live in tents and raise livestock;" Jubal, who "was the father of all who play the harp;" and Tubal-Cain, their half-brother, who "forged all kinds of tools out of bronze and iron" Genesis 4:17-22. Also see Bacon, *Advancement* I.vi.8.

[27] For the genealogy of Adam through Noah see Genesis 5: Adam, Seth, Enosh, Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared, Enoch, Methusaleh, Lamech, and Noah.

[28] Genesis 6:5.

[29] Ibid. 6:8.

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hundred and fifty days. Aboard the ark, and sheltered from the rains, are "Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japeth...and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons."[30] In this way, Noah and his "ark…saved the remnant of men from the universal deluge" (52). After the water recedes, Noah, at the behest of God, emerges from the ark, along with his family and the animals which he has brought on board, whereupon they are bidden to "breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth."[31]

Bensalem's records attest to Noah's nautical prowess: it is the example of Noah that serves as the impetus to begin sailing (52). Following God's great inundation, He "said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground anymore for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth: and neither will I again smite every living thing, as I have done."[32] As evidence of this compact, God and Noah establish a covenant:

> I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast on earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast on earth. And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of the flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.[33]

While God promises never again to destroy all life by a flood, Noah, in return, must make two pledges: first, "flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat;" and second, that "whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man."[34] A strict injunction against murder is formalized, and man, henceforth, becomes his brother's keeper.

Abraham is the next patriarch eulogized by the Bensalemites. Descended from Noah through his eldest son, Shem, Abraham is praised for being the "father of the faithful" (64). Between Seth and Noah, there are nine generations; there are also nine generations between Shem and Abram, Abraham's given name prior to his renaming by God. Finding its origins in

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[30] Ibid. 7:13.

[31] Ibid. 8:17.

[32] Ibid. 8:21.

[33] Ibid. 9:9-10.

[34] Ibid. 9:4-6. Here, a brief return to the beginning of the *New Atlantis* is warranted. Having just arrived in port, the Bensalemites administer a series of oaths to the sailors: first, that they swear they are Christians; second, that they are not pirates; and finally, that they have not shed blood in forty days. It is the third caveat with which we are concerned. The forty-day prohibition against murder may originate in this covenant between God and Noah.

Assyrian, Abram is usually taken to mean "lofty father," albeit inconclusively.[35] God and Abraham enter into two covenants: the first occurs while he is still Abram; and the second occurs after he is renamed and thus reborn. Abram is first called by God to travel to a foreign land and receive a land endowment:

> I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.[36]

It is only after the second covenant—the covenant of circumcision—that, by God, Abram is called Abraham. This new name, like the new title, 'Tirsan,' is accompanied by new responsibilities to and promises from God:

> And thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations I have made thee. And I will make thee exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant.[37]

Abraham is considered "the father of the faithful" (64) by the Bensalemites because, through his seed, all the families of the earth are to be blessed.

Despite God's promise of fertility, Abraham's wife, Sarah, is barren. His first child, Ishmael, is by Sarah's servant, Hagar, raising a question in relation to the Bensalemites: do the Bensalemite men also bear children by their servants? However, when Sarah is long past her child-bearing years, God causes Abraham and Sarah to conceive, and they birth a son, Isaac. God constantly tests Abraham; one such test involves Isaac. God calls upon Abraham to attest to his faith. As proof of his allegiance, Abraham, as commanded by God, is willing to sacrifice Isaac. At the last moment, when God is sure that Abraham is devoted to Him, He sends a ram. Isaac is saved, and the ram is sacrificed in his place. When this biblical story is considered in light of the Tirsan, an interesting picture emerges. Abraham's primary allegiance is to God: before his wife and before his children, Abraham is devoted to God, so much so that in *The Advancement of Learning*, Bacon presents Abraham as the epitome of righteousness.[38] If Abraham, a patriarch eulogized by the Bensalemites at the Feast of the Family, is willing to sacrifice his son on God's command, what does this suggest about the Tirsan? Is the primary devotion of a Bensalemite father to his family, to God, or to the regime?

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[35] Altabin, the King who ruled during Bensalem's war with Atlantis, is presumed to mean "twice lofty."

[36] Genesis 12:2-3.

[37] Ibid. 17:4-7.

[38] Bacon, *Advancement* II.xxv.1.

In the Scriptures, Abraham is never directly called "the father of the faithful" (64), despite being implied such by the etymology of his name and his covenant with God. In Romans, Abraham is identified as "the father of all them that believe," both those who have been circumcised and those who remain uncircumcised.[39] The final content of the hymns is the praise of Jesus: "concluding ever with a thanksgiving for the nativity of our Saviour, in whose birth the births of all are only blessed" (64). It is only after having praised the Old Testament patriarchs that the hymns turn to a consideration of Jesus. With the coming of Jesus, all births are consecrated, including the birth of the Tirsan, his descendants, and all of the Bensalemites.

The Feast of the Family evidently honors the virile patriarchs of large families. Adam, Noah, and Abraham are renown for having "peopled the world," while Jesus remains childless (64). Since the historical figures eulogized at the Feast are biblical and thus semi-political, rather than acutely political or philosophic, what does this suggest about the relationship between the Bensalemites and God?

ii. The Blessings

After dinner, the Tirsan again retires. In seclusion, as before, "he maketh some private prayers" (64). Having done so, he returns a third and final time "to give blessing." Two blessings are proffered: the first is a general blessing, bestowed upon all of his descendants; the second is an optional blessing, bestowed on no more than two eminent sons, if the Tirsan so desires. Since all of the Tirsan's children receive the first blessing, one might question the grace which accompanies its recitation. The general honor seems to point to the nature of families. A child may not be preeminent, yet still remain a valuable member of the family.

As the ritual of the blessing begins, each of the Tirsan's descendants is called. The Tirsan may call "them forth by one and by one, by name as he pleaseth, though seldom the order of age be inverted" (64). The general blessing is not based on individual merit in either content or the manner in which it is bestowed; rather, it is bestowed according to seniority.[40] As each of his children, in turn, kneels before him, the Tirsan places his hand on the head of his child and recites the following prayer:

> *Son of Bensalem, (or Daughter of Bensalem,) thy father saith it; the man by whom thou hast breath of life speaketh the word; The blessing of the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, and the Holy Dove be upon thee, and make the days of thy pilgrimage good and many.*

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[39] Romans 4:11.

[40] If the Bensalemites practice bigamy or polygamy, or remarriage following the death of or divorce from one's previous spouse, there is likely a complication in each mother favoring her particular children.

All of the Tirsan's descendants are the children of Bensalem; he does not bless his offspring as his children, but rather as the children of the state. By emphasizing the relationship between the Tirsan's children and Bensalem, Bacon is pointing to an inherent danger in all regimes. On the one hand, a state must encourage procreation. On the other hand, a state must ensure that one's familial attachments do not exceed one's allegiance to the state. This danger is particularly acute in large families—such as families with thirty descendants; a Tirsan possesses the familial power and numbers to prove dangerous to the state. To ameliorate the complications that arise regarding loyalty in large families, the family name of the Tirsan is not disclosed. Prior to being members of their family, then, the Tirsan's children are Bensalemites.

Twice during the blessing, the Tirsan iterates that he is the one who is making this appeal on behalf of his children. It is "thy father [who] saith it; the man by whom thou hast breath of life speaketh the word" (64). When Adam is first created, God "breathe[s] into his nostril the breath of life."[41] The Tirsan appears to be likening himself to a creative God. Unlike Adam, who is given breath directly by God, the Tirsan's children are the creations of a mortal man. As such, the Tirsan simultaneously is highlighting his involvement in his children's births, while emphasizing his responsibility for their continued happiness.

The blessings are made in the name of three biblical figures: "the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, and the Holy Dove" (64). God, Jesus, and the Holy Ghost are all invoked by the Tirsan. The Holy Dove is not a common designation for the Holy Ghost; according to St. Luke, "the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased."[42] Although Jesus has already been eulogized in the hymns, he is further recognized in this blessing. By appealing to the Trinity, the Tirsan is emphasizing the importance of Christianity in the futures of his children.

Having procured the appropriate divine assistance, the Tirsan's request for his children is simple: first, he asks that the blessing of the trinity "*be upon*" them (64); and second, echoing Jacob, Abraham's grandson, he asks that "*the days of th[eir] pilgrimage* [be made] *good and many*." Jacob's life is not devoid of hardships. In recalling his commentary on Jacob's life, the Tirsan seems to be reminding his children that a life of difficulties does not preclude one from leading a good life. As such, the Tirsan's counsel seems to be one of prudent reflection: retrospectively, one may lead a good life, despite obstacles and hardships. At this juncture, one might question the specific reason the Tirsan is blessing his children. The Tirsan does not request anything exceptional for his descendants in this common blessing; instead, he asks for ease in life and comfort, rather than greatness.

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[41] See Genesis 2:7, 7:22; Job 33:4; and Acts 17:25.

[42] Luke 3:22.

Having blessed his descendants, the Tirsan has the option of blessing any two of his eminent sons. While the common blessing is always recited at the Feast, this second blessing need not be administered. Only if the Tirsan believes that he has "any…sons of eminent merit and virtue (so they not be above two)" (64), he may choose to give a second blessing. Commemorating their special position, each son thus honored receives a gift symbolic of Cain's labor; they are each given "a jewel, made in the figure of an ear of wheat, which they ever after wear in front of their turban or hat." Since the father is permitted to select two, one, or none of his sons for this blessing, this honor is only bestowed if one of the Tirsan's sons is worthy. If none of the Tirsan's sons are worthy, none receive this blessing. Moreover, as this is a public honor, the recipients of which are identifiable, the father must choose wisely: the sons whom he selects, if he does select any sons, serve as a public reflection of his own merits as a father and his ability to distinguish eminence from favor.[43]

If this portion of the Feast is included, the father then proceeds to bless his selected sons. Apparently simultaneously in the case of two recipients, the Tirsan, "laying his arm over their shoulders," blesses his two chosen sons (64). Consisting of four parts, this blessing is terse: it begins with salutations—"Sons;" this introduction is followed by a declaration of thanks by the Tirsan for their birth—"it is well ye are born;" third, there is an exhortation to "give God the Praise;" and last, it closes with hope for their futures—"*persevere to the end*." The final caveat of the blessing is very telling. It is an exhortation by the Tirsan to his sons: he seems to be asking them to remain steadfast. Given that they are already virtuous, the Tirsan reminds them to be resolute. When considered with the previous general blessing and its suggestion of longevity and happiness, the Tirsan now asks more of his sons, rather than for them. Here the Tirsan reveals an important understanding of human nature. Living a life of merit and virtue requires work: one does not simply become "eminent in merit and virtue;" one must strive to lead such a life, and constantly persevere to maintain such a life. At this point in the ceremony, those who are given this second blessing are presented with a gift: a bejeweled ear of wheat.

Following the blessings, come "music, and dances, and other recreations, after their manner" (64). Not only do the Bensalemites compose "excellent poesy," they also play music and dance. Thus concludes the narrator's discussion of this Feast of the Family. According to the narrator's account, he has disclosed "the full order of that Feast."

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[43] None of the Bensalemite males with whom the sailors have interacted thus far, have been said to wear an ear of wheat on their turbans or hats.

Considerations on the Feast of the Family

Since Bacon's narrator has already interpreted the Feast as a "most natural, pious, and reverend custom" (60), it is incumbent on readers of the *New Atlantis* to consider the Feast of the Family in light of the provided criteria: first, one must consider the relationship between the Feast and nature; second, one must look at the piety of the Feast; and third, one must assess the reasons that this Feast is worthy of respect. Throughout this analysis, one must remember that this is a Feast of the Family, and thus it must be assessed in relation to familial relationships.

One presumes that the Feast is natural insofar as it follows the order of nature. Family, then, is of paramount importance to Bensalem. However, it is not sufficient to suggest that it is simply family that Bensalemites venerate; rather, it is a celebration of large families. As such, the order of nature prescribes that men multiply profusely. This brings us to an essential question: how do the Bensalemites understand marriage?

If, and only if, there is one mother who has given birth to all thirty of the Tirsan's descendants does she watch and listen to the events of the Feast from the traverse. As mentioned, she is unseen but can see, and she is unheard but can hear. She is, in effect, completely removed from the order of the Feast. Why is this the case? This ritual distinguishes between the private and the public realm: a woman is the mistress of the domestic arena, whereas a man is master of the public arena. Since this Feast is a public recognition of the family, it seems appropriate that the father, rather than the mother, is the public face of the family. Bensalemites, by having a ritual such as this one, adhere to the natural distinction between women and men: since women give birth to babies and are the primary care-givers when children are young, their relationships with their offspring are different from those of their husbands. Men, on the other hand, provide for their children, socially and economically. In patrilineal societies, it is the father, not the mother, whose name is given to children; consequently, it is the father's lineage, rather than the mother's, that establishes the social rank of a child. If this is the case on Bensalem, in order to encourage a father to maintain an active role in child rearing, this Feast promotes fatherly involvement in the lives of his children. As such, both Bensalemite mothers and Bensalemite fathers have invested interest in their children.

This brings us to a crucial question: are the Bensalemites polygamists? While it is possible for a man to father thirty children, it is far less likely for a woman to give birth to thirty children, let alone thirty surviving children. If Bensalemites practice polygamy, then the conflicts within families, particularly between wives, presumably increase. Each wife, based on a love of one's own, likely favors her own child, rather than the children of her sister-wives. Alternately, Bensalemite males may have multiple wives, but not simultaneously, and thus practice serial-monogamy—permitting remarriage following divorce or widowhood. If this is the case, some of the consequences are similar to the results of polygamy. The current wife tends to favor her own children, likely the younger children, while the children of former wives, the older children, are placed in a compromised position. Thus, the issue of polygamy and the issue of successive wives is the same: each wife favors her own offspring. At this point, it is unclear how the Bensalemites understand marriage: is their approach to marriage biblical, and thus polygamist, or are their practices modern, and thus monogamist? At this point in the *New Atlantis*, it is premature to come to any conclusions.

In addition to being described as natural, the Feast is also described as pious: during the course of the Feast, the Tirsan offers "divine service (61); "private prayers" are recited (64); hymns are sung to Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Jesus (64); and the children receive blessings (64). In addition, the blessings themselves evoke God and the Trinity (64). That being said, it is difficult to discern the respect in which this Feast is pious.[44] Notably absent from the proceedings is a priest. Some Bensalemites are, by vocation, Christian priests (44). Yet, a priest attends neither the consultations on the family, nor the ritual itself. This brings the issue of Bensalemite piety to the fore: on Bensalem, what does it mean to be pious?[45]

Last, the narrator asserts that this ritual is worthy of consideration. This does seem to be true. By paying homage to the family, the Tirsan Feast is an expression of domestic unity, order, and stability. In this way, then, the Bensalemites publicly laud the family and recognize the necessity of stable families within the state. However, the honor is not bestowed qualitatively, based on merit, but rather quantitatively, based on size. While a distinction is made between families "varied by discretion, according to the number and dignity of the family" (63), there is no indication of the means or method by which this is assessed. Only one clue is presented by Bacon's narrator to gauge how they determine the differing merit of families: it seems likely that the criterion for establishing distinction, other than size, is affiliation with the House of Salomon. Those families who have relatives in the House receive greater exemptions and increased gifts.

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[44] Paterson goes so far as to suggests that the Feast of the Family "is more pagan than Christian." Paterson, "Role of Christianity" 437.

[45] Faulkner argues that the Feast of the Family is notable by "the absence of even a semblance of Christian sacraments or aristocratic primogeniture....[N]o priest appears to regulate morals.... [and t]hese rites conclude not by pointing to heaven or hell, but pleasures here and now." Faulkner 125.

Notably emphasized by the ritual is the relationship between family and happiness. Once the King's charter is read aloud, the Bensalemites affirm their happiness: "Happy are the people of Bensalem" (63). Fecundity of the subjects and support of the king warrant happiness. These do not appear to be an oppressed people; on the contrary, the Bensalemites appear joyful. Domestic concerns and public concerns seem to be separated. The father is responsible for settling discord, ameliorating distress, ensuring the financial stability of his offspring, and advising on future decisions and marriage. On the other hand, the state is responsible for ensuring that the father's decrees are enacted. As such, the father is ruler of his household, while the king is ruler of his state.

A crucial question arises from the narrator's account of the Tirsan: what is the Bensalemite understanding of marriage? This question, left unanswered at this point, is essential to understanding not only this ritual, but also the Bensalemite family structure. It is premature to assess the Feast of the Family as "compounded of all goodness" (60) while this question remains unanswered. How can one understand the nature of a family, if one does not yet understand the nature of the fundamental relationship underpinning the domestic organization?

CHAPTER SIX: JOABIN

For the first time since the conclusion of the sailors' three-day seclusion, the narrator mentions the length of time that the sailors have been on the island. Subsequent to coming ashore, the sailors have spent two days unloading their ship, three days alone in the Strangers' House, three days conversing with the governor-priest, and at least one day observing and learning about the Feast of the Family. According to Bacon's narrator, at this point "six or seven days [a]re spent" (64). Has approximately one week passed since their arrival on the island, in which case the Feast of the Family and the governor-priest's speeches have occurred concurrently? Or, is this an additional six or seven days, making the total amount of time that the sailors have spent on the island approximately two weeks? Unfortunately, the narrator's chronological reference does not prove particularly enlightening: the length of the sailors' sojourn on Bensalem remains unclear.[1] Sufficient time has passed, however, for two of the sailors to receive an invitation to the Feast of the Family and for the crew to begin "obtaining acquaintance with many of the city" (60).

Bacon's narrator, by this time, also has formed a rapport with one of the Bensalemites. Although their relationship is not described as a friendship, it is characterized as a "strait acquaintance" (64). There are two unique features of the narrator's association with this Bensalemite: first, this is the only personal relationship described in the text; and second, this particular Bensalemite, Joabin, is the only living man in the *New Atlantis* introduced by name; in addition, Joabin is described as both a merchant and a Jew. A study of Joabin requires three immediate points of consideration: first, his occupation; second, his name; and third, his religious affiliation as a Jew.

The only other person in the text whose precise occupation has been revealed is the governor-priest. He, however, has two occupations—or, more specifically, an occupation and a vocation, according to his own explanation: "by office I am Governor of this House of Strangers, and by vocation I am a Christian priest" (44). Clearly, he is to be understood as a *governor-priest*. Following from the governor-priest's example, is Joabin properly understood as a *merchant-Jew*? Given the island's travel restrictions, the narrator knows that Bensalemites are prohibited from voyaging abroad. What type of merchant is Joabin? Since he is likely forbidden from traveling overseas, Joabin must be a domestic merchant.[2]

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[1] Paterson declares that the ambivalence with which the narrator considers the amount of time that the sailors have been on the island, is a result of the unimportance regarding the time frame. Paterson, "Baconian Science" 153.

Joabin's name is reminiscent of the Old Testament general, Joab. Analyzing the biblical Joab is helpful in coming to understand the Bensalemite's Joabin. As commander of King David's army, Joab, King David's nephew, is remembered for having been an adept strategist.[3] While lauded as a tactician, Joab's career is not without blemishes. Some of his actions are considered questionable, not only by historians but also by those then present: first, the avenging of Asahel, his brother; second, the state sanctioned murder of Uriah; third, the murder of Absalom; and last, the coup against Solomon, King David's chosen successor.

In the midst of a civil war between David—whose troops are led by Joab—and Saul[4]—whose troops are led by Abner—Joab's brother, Asahel, is killed. On the battlefield, Asahel attempts to engage Abner. Despite Abner's repeated requests to refrain, Asahel refuses to retreat: "Howbeit [Asahel] refused to turn aside: wherefore Abner with the hinder end of the spear smote him under the fifth rib, that the spear came out behind him; and he fell down there, and died in the same place."[5] Age and experience triumph over enthusiasm. Asahel's daring leads to his demise.[6] Following Asahel's death, Abner rightly fears that Joab might exact revenge; although Joab is enraged and vows retribution, he bides his time and waits until an appropriate opportunity arises in which to kill Abner.

To conclude the civil war, a peace treaty is required. Joab initiates and organizes the meeting between David and his enemy. However, Joab's actual intentions are vengeful. On

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[2] In his account of Salomon's House, the governor-priest reveals that a select group of Bensalemites are permitted to travel abroad (58-59). Only later in the *New Atlantis* are these brethren identified as Merchants of Light (81). Is Joabin properly understood as a Merchant of Light?

[3] 2 Samuel 8:16; 20:23; 1 Chronicles 11:6; 18:15, 27:34.

[4] Saul is the first king of Israel. He is best remembered for his defeat of the Philistines. During Saul's reign, David, future King of Israel, is the royal harpist. David, after slaying Goliath, gains favor with the people. As a result, a civil war erupts. The war concludes with David's victory and Saul's suicide. 1 Samuel 9-31.

[5] 2 Samuel 2:23.

[6] For Bacon's consideration of the false pride of youth and untimely death, see Bacon, *Wisdom* "Memnon, or the Premature" 53.

Joab's advice, David invites Abner to Jerusalem. Upon Abner's arrival in Hebron, Joab, unbeknownst to David, kills his rival general.[7] David condemns Joab's unsanctioned action:

> I and my kingdom are for ever guiltless before The Lord for the blood of Abner the son of Ner; Let it rest on the head of Joab, and on all his father's house; and let there not fail from the house of Joab one that hath an issue, or that is a leper, or that leaneth on a staff, or that falleth on the sword, or that lacketh bread.[8]

Although publicly rebuked by King David, Joab retains his office and continues to battle for his king. While one may empathize with Joab's frustration at the death of his brother, Abner's murder is not justifiable: Abner does kill Joab's brother; yet, that slaying occurs upon a battlefield. To avenge Asahel's death, Joab willingly exploits his position in the state and compromises his country's tenuous peace.

Joab's second notable act of injustice is another murder. Unlike his murder of Abner, Joab now kills at the request of his king. King David, having witnessed Bathsheba bathing, becomes infatuated. Yet, Bathsheba is married to Uriah, a soldier in David's army. Overcome by lust, David and Bathsheba have sex, and she becomes pregnant. In an effort to conceal their adultery from their spouses and the Israelite people, David conspires to recall Uriah from battle so that he might believe the child is his. Although he is brought home, Uriah refuses to have intercourse with his wife:

> And Uriah said unto David, The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in tents; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields; shall I then go into mine house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? As thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing.[9]

Uriah, fiercely loyal to Israel and his King, returns to battle without having slept with his wife. To cover his adultery, David orders Joab to have Uriah killed. Joab obeys; Uriah is sent to the front lines where he dies. Bathsheba, newly widowed, marries David. Their first child, the one conceived adulterously, dies at birth; however, their second child, Solomon, who is conceived after they are married, lives to become King of Israel.

David's reign is marred by war—both international and civil—and palace intrigue. One such event is a palace uprising orchestrated by his son, Absalom. Joab, in an effort to save his

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[7] Joab murders Abner in the same way that Abner has killed Asahel: "And when Abner was returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside in the gate to speak with him quietly, and smote him there under the fifth rib, that he died, for the blood of Asahel his brother" 2 Samuel 3:27; also see 2 Samuel 2:13-32; 1 Kings 2:5.

[8] 2 Samuel 3:28-29.

[9] Ibid. 11:11.

King and quell the rebellion, thereby ensuring Israel's stability, kills his cousin.[10] Guilt ridden and mourning the death of his son, David arranges all the customary funeral rites for Absalom. Joab rebukes his uncle's sentimentality, specifically his "weeping and mourning:"[11]

> Then Joab came into the house to the king and said, 'Thou hast shamed this day the faces of all thy servants, which this day have saved thy life, and the lives of thy sons and of thy daughters, and the lives of thy wives, and the lives of thy concubines; In that thou lovest thine enemies, and thy hatest thy friends. For thou declared this day, that thou regardest neither princes nor servants: for this day I perceive, that if Absalmon had lived, and all we had died this day, then it had pleased thee. Now therefore arise, go forth, and speak comfortably unto thy servants; for I swear by the Lord, if thou go not forth, there will not tarry one with thee this night: and that will be worse unto thee than all the evil that befell thee from thy youth until now.'[12]

Through Joab's censuring of his King, we come to understand an aspect of the nature of Joabin's biblical namesake. Joab is a man of harsh, practical, political understanding. He is a man of war. Joab seems to adhere to a strict understanding of right and wrong, based on a deep love of his own: he loves his own brother, his own King, and his own country. From this perspective, Joab is not only a dangerous man against whom to fight in war, but also a dangerous man with whom to share confidences during times of peace.

An aging David must choose a successor. Like the Tirsan, it is David's duty to ensure that his house is in order prior to his death. Contrary to the Israelite tradition of primogeniture, David selects Solomon, Bathsheba's son, as heir. Joab does not support King David's choice; instead, he believes that David's eldest son, Adonijah, is the rightful heir. Joab's perspective on primogeniture can perhaps be understood as rooted in his commitment to the traditional rules of his people; for Joab, primogeniture, rather than merit, is the appropriate path for succession. Consequently, the loyalty with which Joab serves David does not extend to David's son, Solomon.[13] When Solomon ascends his father's throne, he does not forget Joab's disloyalty. For the murders that Joab has committed during David's reign and his support of Adonijah, Solomon has Joab killed.

What, then, is the relationship between the Bensalemite Joabin and the biblical Joab? We begin with the difference in their names. In Hebrew, when pluralized, *Joab* becomes *Joabin.*

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[10] Ibid. 15-18.

[11] 2 Samuel 19:1.

[12] Ibid. 19:5-7.

[13] 1 Kings 1:7; 2:28.

Thus, Joabin means a multiple of Joabs.[14] On this island of Bensalem—a great distance from ancient Israel, historically and geographically—lives a man named after an Israelite general who stands in opposition to Solomon and is executed for his disloyalty. If Bensalem's House of Salomon honors the biblical Solomon, and Jaobin honors the biblical Joab, what is the relationship between Joabin and the House of Salomon? Joabin, when considered in this biblical light, seems to become more of an enigma than he was before his name is historically contextualized.

The third descriptor in the text identifies Joabin as a Jew. In contradistinction to Jews in other parts of the world, the Jews of Bensalem are said to be of a differing disposition. Based on his relationship with Joabin, the narrator generalizes about all of the Bensalemite Jews. A semblance of religious plurality seems to exist on Bensalem; "they have some few stirps of Jews yet remaining among them, whom they leave to their own religion" (65). Although few in number, these Jewish communities seem free to practice their religion, without state interference. According to the narrator, because of the "differing disposition of the Jews" of Bensalem, it is politically feasible to allow them their religion. How is Joab different from, and similar to, Jews whom the narrator has known?

The only obvious similarity between European Jews and Joabin, other than professing Judaism, is circumcision. Commemorating the covenant between God and Abraham, poeticized in the hymn to the Tirsan, Jewish men undergo circumcision.[15] Joabin, like other Jews, is circumcised. How the narrator knows this, one can only wonder, but he believes it worthy of mention. Aside from circumcision, however, the similarity between Joabin and other Jews whom the narrator has known, ends. There are two primary points of comparison: first, Joabin's understanding of Christ; and second, Joabin's understanding of Bensalem, specifically his relationship to the state.[16] Based on these two comparative points of assessment, according to the narrator, the Jews of Bensalem are unlike Jews in the rest of the world.[17]

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[14] Weinberger, *New Atlantis* 65 fn. 196.

[15] Genesis 22.

[16] N.I. Matar briefly considers possible fifteenth century through seventeenth century literary sources for Joabin's theological perspective. Matar, however, does not distinguish between what Joabin says, and what the narrator extrapolates that Joabin would say. N.I. Matar, "The Sources of Joabin's Speech in Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis*," *Notes and Queries* (March 1994): 75-78.

[17] On Joabin's relationship to Bacon's theological perspective, see White 150-58.

Religiously, "whereas [other Jews] hate the name of Christ…these [Bensalemite Jews] (contrariwise) give unto our Saviour many high attributes" (65).[18] According to the narrator's assessment, European Jews do not esteem Christ: they accept Jesus neither as the son of God, nor as the messiah; Jews still await the coming of the messiah. On Bensalem, however, there is no conflict between Jewish theology and Christian theology.[19] Assured of Joabin's respect for Christ, the narrator provides a number of proofs of Joabin's differing disposition from other Jews whom he has known; the exact number of proofs is dependent on how one counts the pieces of evidence. In either case, there are two different types of arguments: first, arguments concerning the nature of Christ; and second, arguments concerning beliefs in Christ.

In order to accept Christ's divinity, one must first accept his lineage; one must admit that Jesus is born of a virgin and is the son of God. With this theological necessity in mind, namely accepting the divine nature of Jesus, the narrator makes three claims about Joabin's understanding of Christ: first, that "[s]urely this man of whom I speak would ever acknowledge that Christ was born of a Virgin" (65);[20] second, that Joabin would admit of Christ "that he was more than a man;" and last, that Joabin would say, "God made [Jesus] ruler of the Serephims which guard his throne." A devout European Jew is unlikely to concede any of these three Christian beliefs. First, if one accepts Mary's virginity, one must accept that she is impregnated by more than a man. Interestingly, Joabin does not himself say that "Christ was born of a virgin." Rather, the narrator assures the reader that Joabin would "[s]urely…ever acknowledge" Mary's virginity. Based on the text, these three claims about Joabin's understanding of Jesus seem to be extrapolated from the narrator's knowledge of Joabin as an acquaintance, rather than Joabin's own concessions. Regarding the third claim, that "God made [Jesus] ruler of the Serephims which guard his throne," the narrator states that Joabin "would tell," not that he does tell this to be true of Jesus. According to Bacon, the Seraphim, "angels of Love," are of the highest order, while the cherubim, or "angels of Light," are of the second order.[21] Jesus has a special relationship, according to Joabin, with these angels of love. Surely the narrator's assertions regarding Joabin's theological understanding of Christ's divinity seem linked to his understanding of the character of his acquaintance.

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[18] Judaism, as practiced on Bensalem, seems to be similar to the Judaism that is preached by Christ. As is well documented, Jesus does not advocate a religious inauguration; rather, he encourages religious reform. Jesus wants to reform the Jewish religious practices, bringing them closer, in his view, to those he believes are intended by God. It is only when Jesus' teaching is rejected by the majority of Jews that he turns to preach to the gentiles. With this understanding of scriptural Christianity, as opposed to common practices, one is left to consider the relationship between traditional Judaism and Christianity, and that of the Bensalemites. On one level, it seems that Bensalem practices a very traditional type of religion, one based on Scripture and Old Testament law. There is no evidence of a complex clergy on Bensalem. Religion seems to be a far more simple and familial practice. As such, when church hierarchy is removed, it is possible to follow a far simpler form of devotion.

[19] According to Spitz, Joabin believes "neither in Judaism nor in Christianity; for what Bacon sought was a man who has rejected religion." Spitz 58.

[20] See 1 Samuel 23:12 47:1 62:5; Jeremiah 14:17; Also, Innes notes that Joabin makes no mention of Christ's "death and resurrection." Innes 17.

The second set of arguments are derived from Joabin's previous statements. Although all of the names which the Jews of the island use to refer to Jesus are "inferior to his divine Majesty, ...they are far from the language of other Jews" (65). First, the Bensalemite Jews "call him...the *Milken Way*." While Milken Way is not a biblical name for Jesus, it does imply that through his teachings and his example, he shows one the path to heaven.[22] Second, they call him "the *Eliah* of the *Messiah*"—a forerunner to the messiah, although not the messiah himself.[23] Both of these appellations seem to indicate that Jesus is indeed holy; however, they do not proffer him with the highest order.

Unlike other Jews known to the narrator, who "have a secret inbred rancour against the people amongst whom they live" (65), Bensalemite Jews are devoted to their state. Although the narrator makes much of the secrecy of this resentment, it cannot be particularly well hidden if he is aware of it. Further, the narrator asserts that this hatred is inculcated. Ingrained in their characters from birth, Jews are hostile to gentiles. It seems that since Jews often live in isolated political and religious units in the midst of a greater state, the gentiles perceive this uniqueness as rancor. On Bensalem, however, the situation is different. Not only is there no apparent animosity between Joabin and gentile Bensalemites, but he "make[s] no end of commending" his homeland. Joabin's primary loyalty is to the state of Bensalem.

Perhaps the differing disposition of Bensalemite Jews, as opposed to European Jews, also derives from their distinct, historical tradition. Unlike other Jews, "by tradition among the Jews [of Bensalem]...it [is] believed that the people thereof [a]re of the generations of Abraham, by another son, whom they call Nachoran" (65).[24] There are two distinct ways of understanding this statement, both of which hinge on one's interpretation of "the people thereof." Genealogically, Bensalemite Jews trace their lineage through Nachoran, rather than through Isaac.

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[21] Bacon, *Advancement* I.vi.3.

[22] Weinberger, *New Atlantis* 198, fn. 198.

[23] Ibid. 65, fn. 199; also see Malachi 4:5; Hebrews 3:23; Matthew 16:4; 17:10.

[24] For biblical references to Nachor, see Genesis 11:22-27; 22:20-23; 24:15, 47, 29:5; 1 Chronicles 1:26; Luke 3:32.

Problematically, there is no biblical record of a son of Abraham who is named Nachoran. Abraham has a grandfather and a brother, both of whom are named Nachor; however, while Abraham may have had an unidentified child named Nachoran, there is no biblical record of this person. Consequently, the ancestral claim by Bensalemites is unclear in its connection to Nachoran. A further complication rests in who the people of this lineage actually are. While Joabin's statement necessarily applies to Bensalemite Jews, it might also apply to Bensalemite gentiles. Do Bensalemite Jews believe that all of the islanders are the descendants of Abraham's son, Nachoran?[25]

Secondly, the unique behavior of the island's Jews may have to do with the founding myth of the state. Although Solamona is "esteem[ed]...as the lawgiver of [this] nation," he is said to have reigned a mere nineteen hundred years ago (56). Prior to that time, Bensalem has a long history—one which includes Altabin's war (51-56). To this point in the *New Atlantis*, there has been no discussion regarding the identity of the original founder of the island. According to Joabin, "Moses by a secret cabala ordained the laws of Bensalem which they now use" (65). Moses, most famous for freeing the Jews from Egyptian bondage, establishing the Mosaic covenant through the Ten Commandments, leading the Jews through the desert for forty years, and bringing them to the promised land, is also claimed by the islanders as the founder of Bensalem's laws. When and where these laws are given remains undisclosed; if, as Joabin contends, Moses is the lawgiver of this nation, one has to rethink the Jewish tradition as a chosen people. Further, Moses not only ordains the ancient laws of the Jews in the Middle East, but also the laws "they now use" on Bensalem. Moses' laws, in conjunction with Solamona's modifications, are the legal fabric of the state. Salomon's House and the laws of secrecy are appended to the original laws. According to Joabin's account of the legal statutes of Bensalem, Nachoran's offspring are given their foundational laws by Moses, and their contemporary laws by their second founder, Solamona.

Further, according to Joabin, at the coming of the Messiah, "the king of Bensalem should sit at his feet, whereas other kings should keep a great distance" (65). Joabin believes, as do the other Jews on the island, that Bensalem occupies a unique position with God. On the one hand, Joabin has tolerant perspectives on Christ. Yet, Joabin also believes that the island has been chosen by the God of the Hebrews: first, as the lineage of Nachoran; and second, by Moses, their original lawgiver. This sentiment regarding God's preference for Bensalem has already been evidenced at the time of their conversion to Christianity. When discussing the wise man's prayer delivered during the conversion, the governor-priest states that the exhortation is addressed to the "Lord God of heaven and earth" (48); the God in question seems to be the God of the Old Testament. Twice, in the course of the prayer, the wise man implies that there is a covenant between the order of Salomon's House and God: first, God "has vouchsafed of [His] grace to those of [this] order, to know [His] works of creation, and the secrets of them;" and second, that in sending the pillar of light, God has "in some part secretly promise[d]" them the ability to succeed in interpretation. Further, the relationship between Solamona, Salomon's House, and the biblical Hebrews further points to this unique relationship which precedes the island's conversion.

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[25] In consideration of the conversion, perhaps the "Lord God of heaven and earth" (48), to whom the wise man prays, is the Abrahamic God of the Old Testament.

Perplexingly, the narrator asserts that "[a]side from these Jewish dreams, [Joabin i]s a wise man, and learned, and of great policy, and excellently seen in the laws and customs of that nation" (65). Ascribing some of Joabin's beliefs to imaginings, one is left in the difficult position of determining when Joabin is dreaming, and when he is lucid.[26] Is Joabin's praise of Christ to be viewed as a dream? It seems unlikely that the narrator's proof of Joabin's "differing disposition" from other Jews is to be relegated to the realm of dreams. Joabin's theories on the origin of the Jews of the island, the Mosaic source for the island's laws, and the privileged place of the Bensalemite king at the foot of the Messiah are more plausibly disregarded. Given the praise that the narrator bestows upon Joabin—his wisdom, his learnedness, his great policy, and his knowledge of the customs and laws of the island—why are some of his thoughts, and particularly his theological thoughts, belittled by the narrator? Moreover, if he is apt to dream, is it prudent to accept Joabin as an authority in the conversation that ensues? From a slightly different perspective, why does the narrator dub this man wise, and yet refuse to accept his theological outlook?

If Joabin's theology is true, then evidently the Judeo-Christian religious tradition is incomplete. There are three contentious points espoused by Joabin: first, that Abraham has a son, Nachoran, from whom the Jews of the island are descended; second, that the laws of the island are derived from a "secret cabala" designed by Moses; and last, that the Bensalemite king occupies a privileged position in the kingdom of heaven. Moreover, Joabin's "Jewish dreams" not only apply to Bensalemite Jews, but extend to the island as a whole (65).

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[26] Paterson interprets the narrator's assertion regarding "Jewish dreams" in two ways: first, "Joabin's belief in the 'Jewish dreams' is sincere, and the narrator regards him as a wise man, these beliefs excepted;" second, and more conceivably, "Joabin himself sets aside the Jewish dreams...that his desire to have them believed reflects only his judgment that it is useful that they be believed by others." In this latter option, Paterson follows Weinberger. Weinberger, "Science and Rule" 881; Paterson, "Baconian Science" 162-63. Alternately, Innes suggests that Joabin's dreams point to the relationship between Christianity and Bensalem, and have less to do with Judaism than initially appears. As such, in a series of rhetorical questions, Innes posits "that the whole revelation story may be only a 'Christian dream.'" Innes 19.

Genealogically, as has been stated, Abraham does not have a known son named Nachoran.[27] While Nachor is the name of Abraham's brother and of his grandfather, none of his sons are identified by that name in the biblical genealogies. When does Nachoran, or a descendant of Nachoran, settle on Bensalem? There seem to be two possible interpretations of the Bensalemites' ancestry: first, Nachoran himself has traveled to Bensalem and settled the island; or second, the island has been settled by Nachoran's descendants. Both of these possibilities pose interpretative complications. In the first case—that Nachoran himself arrives on this island—it is essential to remember that Noah, who is lauded by the governor-priest as the initiator of seafaring, lives eight generations after Nachoran. During Nachoran's time, men do not venture great distances upon the oceans. How, then, does Nachoran arrive on Bensalem? A second inconsistency is raised by this possibility: if, by some undisclosed feat, Nachoran travels to Bensalem, how are the island's laws given by Moses? In the second case—that Nachoran's descendants settle Bensalem—one must reconsider the history of the Exodus from Egypt. In addition to Jacob's sons, Nachoran's descendants also partake in the Exodus. While this option ameliorates the complication posed by Moses' ordainment of the laws, it complicates the biblical tradition.

In either case, the Jews of the island, although self-identifying as Jews, are actually a different sect, biblically based certainly, but of a differing tradition and possessing a unique covenant. Not only are the Jews of this island in a unique position vis-à-vis God, so too is the island entire. Prior to the reigns of Altabin and Salomona, the Bensalemites acknowledge a fundamental lawgiver: Moses. The laws of the island, however, do not appear to be the same as those revealed at Sinai: Bensalemite laws are based on a "secret cabala" (65). When and where these laws are ordained by Moses is not disclosed: are Nachoran's descendants present at Sinai? Has Moses traveled to Bensalem? Or, like Bartholomew, have the laws been sent by Moses in abstentia? Finally, Bensalem as a whole, according to Joabin, is divinely privileged. The king of the island, not the Father of the House of Salomon, is divinely favored. In spite of his dreams, Joabin is the only contemporary man in the text who is identified by name and called wise. Joabin's wisdom is not only scholarly learning, but also political learning: he is a man "of great policy" and a patriot.

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[27] A possible anagram for Nachoran is an anchor. Understood in this way, it is possible that Nachoran is an anchor that binds Bensalemites together.

The Narrator and Joabin's First Conversation

While Joabin and the narrator partake in many conversations, the narrator chooses to relay a discussion in which Joabin, at the behest of the narrator, explains the Feast of the Family. Since the Feast of the Family has already been discussed in the *New Atlantis*, by returning to this subject matter with Joabin, the narrator implies that the account which he has previously provided is insufficient; this has already been evidenced in this analysis by the questions raised in the previous chapter. By inquiring into domestic organization, the narrator indicates that he is comfortable enough with Joabin to ask about the family. Notably, of all the questions which the narrator might have asked, and any number of conversations which he might have retold, Bacon's narrator focuses on issues of family, sex, and procreation. As before, the narrator makes clear that he has not been present for the Feast; rather, his interest is based on the account he has received from "some of the company" (66). Whereas previously he emphasizes that it is a "most natural, pious, and reverend custom…shewing that nation to be compounded of all goodness" (60), now, in conversation with Joabin, the narrator's implicit concern is the relationship between the Feast and the order of nature. Piety no longer seems to be an issue. Instead, the narrator focuses on the naturalness of the Feast. According to the narrator, he has "never heard of a solemnity wherein nature did so much preside" (66). The narrator's primary concern, however, is the relationship between the humanity of the islanders and the Feast of the Family. Presupposing that the "propagation of families proceedeth from the nuptial copulation" (66), the narrator poses three questions regarding Bensalemite marital practices: "what laws and customs they ha[ve] concerning marriage; and whether they ke[ep] marriage well; and whether they a[re] tied to one wife" (66)?

Verifying the narrator's earlier claim that the Feast warrants consideration, Joabin agrees that there is "reason for to commend the excellent institution of the Feast of the Family" (66). Joabin further lauds the result of the Feast: "those families that are partakers of the blessing of that Feast do flourish and prosper ever after in an extraordinary manner." Before participating in the Feast, the family must flourish in order to accumulate thirty descendants. The precise manner in which the family resultantly flourishes is not discussed. Presumably, as a result of the "gift of revenew, and many privileges, exemptions, and points of honor granted to the father of the family" (62), the family thrives.

Establishing the merit of the narrator's inquiry, Joabin assures him that he "will tell [him] what [he] know[s]" (66). This is the first time in the text that a Bensalemite has agreed to reveal what he knows. While explaining the history of the island—Altabin's war with Atlantis, and

Solamona's reign, including the implementation of the laws of secrecy and the House of Salomon—the governor-priest admittedly chooses to "reserve some particulars, which it is not lawful for [him] to reveal" (50). Thus, the aforementioned accounts are incomplete, despite being "satisfact[ory]" (50). Joabin, alternately, is telling the narrator what he knows about the Feast and the related marriage practices. Since it is known that the island has "laws of secrecy" (46, 51), what is different now? Is full disclosure permitted because the content of the inquiry—an island ritual in honor of a patriarch—is hardly a matter of state security? Has the narrator's clearance been increased? Or, is there a difference between Joabin's position and that of the governor-priest? Again, Joabin is the only living man in the text accredited with wisdom. Further, he is honored as being wise in political matters, both theoretical and practical, and in the island's particular rules and customs. It is also plausible that the explanation rests in a combination of all three possibilities. Although the exact reason is not explained by the narrator, Joabin is willing to share all that he knows about the Feast of the Family.

i. Joabin's Critique of European and Bensalemite Sexual Practices

Juxtaposing European practices with those of Bensalem, Joabin paints a picture of "a little foul AEthiop" and "a fair and beautiful Cherubin" (66). On the one hand, there is the rest of the world including Europe, and on the other, there is Bensalem. Joabin believes "there is not under the heavens so chaste a nation as this of Bensalem; nor so free from all pollution or foulness." Bensalem is virtuous, honest, and clean. Of all the nations in the world, none but Bensalem can boast such purity. Solamona's isolationist policy seems to have worked; he has maintained "the happy and flourishing estate" and "give[n] perpetuity to that which [i]s in his time so happily established" (56). In contrast to the people of China, the Bensalemites are neither "curious, ignorant, fearful, [nor] foolish" (57). On the contrary, presumably as a result of Solamona's policies, Bensalem is "the virgin of the world" (66). Solamona's fears of "novelties, and commixture of manners" (56) are seemingly justifiable. Preventing contact with the rest of the world, Bensalem has been able to avoid the degradation, perversion, and decay suffered by other nations. Further, "there is nothing amongst mortal men more fair and admirable, than the chaste minds of this people" (66).[28] Establishing that the island is worthy of study, Joabin affirms that Bensalem is the "mirror in the world worthy to hold men's eyes" (60). Bensalem, according to Joabin, is a model of political perfection because of its humanity and its people, who are exemplars of chastity.

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[28] The chaste minds of the Bensalemites suggest that their reason is sufficiently strong to overpower their desires.

With the distinction between Bensalem's purity and the debauchery of the rest of the world in full view, Joabin explains the island's marital and sexual practices. On Bensalem, marriage and sex are linked. To have intercourse otherwise, as in Europe, is considered an abomination by the islanders. In order to ensure that there is no pre-marital or extra-marital sex on the island, Bensalem must eliminate all avenues of availability: on Bensalem "there are no stews, no dissolute houses, no courtesans, nor anything of that kind" (66). Joabin contends that sex, once commodified, ensures that marriage falls into disuse. As an example, he looks to Europe and the practices of the sailors: "[t]hey say ye have put marriage out of office." Joabin suggests that lax laws and general decay throughout Europe have relegated marriage to "a remedy for unlawful concupiscence." According to Joabin, in Europe, marriage has become a solution for unwanted pregnancy, rather than a union in which one has desired pregnancies. An inability to control sexual desire, potentially a "spur to marriage," is instead resolved retroactively through marriage. Providing the option, that one's desires may be fulfilled while one remains unmarried, is "more agreeable to [European] corrupt will, [while] marriage is almost expulsed." Further bolstering his point, Joabin poses two rhetorical questions: why would a man "be yoked in marriage" (67), when all of the benefits accrued through marriage, and none of the drawbacks, are available? And, why marry when he can "chuse rather a libertine and impure single life?" Joabin is pointing to the decay of the European family. He observes that if European men "do marry, [they] marry late, when the prime of their years is past." Thus, he suggests, that virile men are choosing to partake in pre-marital sex while they are young; only when they are old and no longer virile, do they tolerate domestic life. Even then, "what is marriage to them but a very bargain; wherein is sought an alliance, or portion, or reputation, with some desire (almost indifferent) of issue; and not the faithful nuptial union of man and wife, that was first instituted." As Joabin explains, marriage is intended by nature to be a union of a man and his wife, in a relationship that is based on loyalty, rather than on social betterment. In late marriages, however, men who are experienced do not "greatly esteem children, (being of the same matter,) as [do] chaste men." Older men, once they marry, are not interested in fathering children.

Concluding with a return to the brothels of Europe, Joabin reiterates that their existence, and indeed their continued toleration, is a source of significant moral deterioration. The promiscuity practiced by European men is not limited to those who are single. Married men also "haun[t]...those dissolute places, or resort to courtesans" (67). Not only is this type of behavior deemed acceptable in Europe, but such offences "are no more punished in married men than in bachelors." The sexual liberation of Europeans is not ebbed by marriage. Once married, European men continue the promiscuous practices developed during their youths.

From the perspective of sailors who have been at sea for over a year, Bensalem cannot fulfill a potential desire which likely may arise: on this island, the only means of procuring sex is through marriage. While the marital attachments of Bacon's sailors are not disclosed, it is reasonable to assume that they have not had sex with women in at least a year. For most mariners, arriving in port and procuring sex are connected. That being said, the governor-priest informs the sailors that they must not hesitate to make known to the islanders any additional requests (45). The sailors do not, however, inquire into needs of a sexual nature. We now know that even if the sailors were to have asked for sex, arrangements cannot be provided. Procurement of a random sexual partner is alleged by Joabin to be impossible on Bensalem.

Why does Bensalem hold marriage as sacred? According to Aristotle, in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, the relationship between a husband and a wife is a pair-bond. Marital unions are the fundamental sub-unit of a state:

> The friendship of a husband and a wife seems to be present by nature, since a human being is by nature disposed to pair off even more than to form a political association, to the extent that a household is prior to and more necessary than a city, and the production of offspring is more common among animals.[29]

Since marriage, understood as a relationship between one man and one woman, is in accord with nature, choosing not "to pair off" is contrary to nature. If this is indeed the case, European sexual practices and the resultant impact on marriage are contrary to nature. Natural male-female relationships are those within the bonds of a marital union. Since family is the fundamental sub-unit of a state, if a man does not have an allegiance to his family, his allegiance to his polity is equivalently weakened. In a state with strong familial associations, people are more likely to consider the well-being of their regime, and the well-being of their offspring, as related. As such, it is in the interest of parents to ensure the longevity and prosperity of the state for the posterity of their children.

Problematically, according to Joabin, "lust [is] like a furnace, that if you stop the flames altogether, it will quench: but if you give any vent, it will rage" (67). In order to prevent sexual impurity, a state must ensure that its citizens do not have access to the means of fueling the flames of indiscretion. Strict prohibitions must exist; otherwise, a state must temper the definition of lust. "Lust is like a furnace;" if one fuels the flames, they ignite, enveloping and consuming a person. Following Bensalemite logic, if the fodder is removed, the flames of desire dissipate.[30] There can be no partial adherence to this practice; if there is a slight reprieve, there can be no return, just as there is no escape from an inferno. Although one might suggests that sex can be legislated at any time, sexual prohibitions, like those practiced on Bensalem, cannot be incorporated if lewd, sexual habits already have been permitted to form. In order to ensure that sex is confined to marriage, a child must be taught appropriate behavior from birth and must not be permitted, or even have the opportunity, to stray.

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[29] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Joe Sachs (Newburyport: Focus Publishing, 2002) 1162a.

Contrasting Bensalemite sexual practices, Joabin argues that the European policy of sexual availability "is a preposterous wisdom; and th[e Bensalemites] call it *Lot's offer*, who to save his guests from abusing offered his daughters" (67). Joabin's biblical allusion is curious. Lot, the nephew of Abraham, dwells in Sodom, a city known for its corruption and debauchery. At one time, "there came two angels to Sodom," who Lot invites into his home.[31] In Sodom, like Bensalem, strangers are subject to scrutiny. This, however, is where the similarity ends. Unlike the Bensalemites who offer strangers "that which belongeth to mercy" (38), the men of Sodom persecute uninvited visitors. In an effort to save his guests, Lot offers his daughters to the Sodomites to placate them:

> I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly. Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known any man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and you do ye to them as *is* good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing.[32]

For the lives of his visitors, Lot is willing to sacrifice his daughters' virginity, if not more. Justification of Lot's offer originates in his love of God: Lot loves God more than he loves himself, and more than he loves his daughters. Therefore, in the name of God, and for God, he sacrifices himself by his willingness to sacrifice his daughters' virginity. However, in doing so, he also defiles himself before God. Lot has tainted his own soul, and thus has made himself less worthy to worship God. Blinding the Sodomites, the guests save their host's daughters from defilement.[33] For their sins, Sodom and all the Sodomites are destroyed by God: the "Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven."[34] Lot and his daughters are saved from the destruction of Sodom, during which Lot's wife perishes. Following the death of his wife, Lot takes his two daughters, and they dwell in a cave.

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[30] Essential to the continuance of any fire is oxygen: without oxygen, there can be no fire. That being said, if lust is like oxygen, is there any way to quench lust fully, without losing something that is essential in man's nature? Extending the fire metaphor, oxygen is essential to the survival of man. Without oxygen, man necessarily dies. If all fodder for lust is removed in order to prohibit the fire of lust, is not something essential in man also lost?

[31] Genesis 19:1.

[32] Ibid. 19:7-8.

[33] Ibid. 19:11.

Lot's daughters are eventually deflowered in an impure manner, albeit not by the Sodomites. Desirous of children but lacking appropriate males with whom to copulate, the daughters contrive to become impregnated by their father. Inebriating Lot, the daughters lie with him, one after the other, one day and then the next.[35] One might argue that once Lot offers his daughters' chastity to the angry Sodomite mob, he has already defiled them. Simply from the suggestion, they become unchaste. In a sense, it is ultimately Lot who is defiled. Arranged by his daughters, Lot not only unknowingly fornicates, but also impregnates his own daughters. Lot commits the sin of incest.

When considered thus, the connection between Lot's offer and the licentiousness of Europe seems to be as follows: in order that extra-marital sex be available, someone's daughters must work in the brothels; moreover, in order that premarital sex be available, someone's unmarried daughters must partake in it. A man must be willing to sacrifice his daughter's virtue to satiate the vices of other men. What father is willing to support the establishment of a whorehouse, when his daughter is to be one of these working women? In order for a father to behave similarly to Lot, he must not consider his daughter as 'his own;' love of one's own must be impressed upon this type of father. As evidenced by Lot, even the suggestion that a woman's virtue is a tradable commodity, perpetuates decay. Lot's daughters witness their father's offer and realize that he is willing to sacrifice their virginity outside the bonds of marriage. With his example in mind, they commit a dual impropriety: first, they choose to fornicate outside wedlock; and second, they choose to do so incestuously, with their own father. Once Lot opens the furnaces of impropriety, licentiousness burns rampantly.

In Bensalemite society, sex is simply unavailable outside the bonds of marriage: heterosexual promiscuity, including pre-marital sex, adultery, and liberality, is impermissible. Similarly, homosexual relationships do not occur; "[a]s for masculine love, they have no touch of it" (67). In no way, however, does the lack of masculine love diminish the profundity of masculine friendships. According to Joabin, "there are not so faithful and inviolate friendships in the world" as on Bensalem. Sex and friendship often seem to be at odds. Men who have true and loyal friendships cannot sully those relationships with sexual interactions. Friendship seems to be equated with pursuits of the mind, not those of the body. According to Joabin, Bensalem seems to adhere to the idiom, cleanliness is next to godliness: "their usual saying is, *That whosoever is unchaste cannot reverence himself;* and they say, *That the reverence of a man's self is, next to religion, the chiefest bridle of all vices*" (68). On Bensalem, chastity is a sign of man's reverence for himself and, along with religion, ensures that all of the other vices are kept in check. The Bensalemites posit that it is in one's own interest to behave chastely.

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[34] Ibid. 19:24.

[35] Ibid. 19:30-38.

Having conflated religion and chastity, Joabin pauses. Desirous to hear Joabin speak more, rather "than to speak [him]self," the narrator concedes Joabin's point. Believing it rude to remain silent, the narrator likens himself to the biblical widow of Serepta: "'That I would say to him, as the widow of Serepta said to Elias; that he was come to bring to memory our sins; and that I confess the righteousness of Bensalem was greater than the righteousness of Europe'" (68). Joabin reminds the narrator of his sins, as Elias does the people of theirs.[36] Elias, or Elijah, receives a call from God to travel to Serepta. Upon his arrival, he meets a widow who is gathering sticks. Elijah asks her for food and water; unfortunately, she has does not have enough to share.[37] According to Elijah, "saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until that day the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth."[38] Just as God says, the food does not fail them. During Elijah's stay, the widow's son falls ill. Based on the analogy, the narrator is akin to the widow, and thus Joabin is akin to Elijah. As paraphrased by the narrator, the widow, addressing Elijah, admits to sins in the past, the precise nature of which remain undisclosed: "What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? Art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?"[39] Although the sins of the widow are not revealed, the narrator's sins, given the context of his statement, seem to be sexual in nature. Joabin's comments remind him of his previous sexual misconduct. Elijah heals the widow's son, essentially returning him from the dead. Is Joabin able to heal the narrator and the rest of the sailors? Or, is Bensalem capable of healing them?[40] Does Bensalem possess these restorative powers? Once her son has been healed, the widow concludes by affirming Elijah's divinity: "And the woman said to Elijah, 'Now by this I know that thou *art* a man of God, *and* that the word of the Lord in thy mouth *is* true.'"[41] What, then, is one to make of Joabin's "Jewish dreams" (65)? At the conclusion of his interjection, the narrator states that he must "confess the righteousness of Bensalem [a]s greater than the righteousness of Europe" (68). Based on the chastity of the island, the narrator, through the description of Joabin, has come to see the lasciviousness of European sexual practices. The ramifications of the narrator's statement point to the importance of regulating sex in order to ensure humanity within a polity.

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[36] Paterson argues that the narrator's likening of Joabin "to the prophet Elijah, seems to be a reference to the key millenarian theme that the arrival of the kingdom of God on earth will be heralded by the appearance of Elijah and the conversion of the Jews to Christianity." Paterson, "Role of Christianity" 428.

[37] 1 Kings 17:12.

[38] Ibid. 17:14.

[39] Ibid. 17:18.

[40] Conversely, Weinberger points out that "Bacon causes the narrator to ignore the widow's fear that Elias had come to kill her son." Weinberger, "Science and Rule" 865-85.

ii. The Marriage Laws

Bowing his head, Joabin begins to delineate Bensalem's "many wise and excellent laws touching marriage" (68). As mentioned, homosexual relationships are non-existent on Bensalem, although it is not clear whether or not they are forbidden as a matter of law. Answering the particular question of the narrator—"whether [the Bensalemites] are tied to one wife" (66)—Joabin affirms that the islanders are monogamists: "They allow no polygamy" (68). Joabin then turns to the narrator's other questions—"what laws and customs [the Bensalemites] ha[ve] concerning marriage; and whether they ke[ep] marriage well" (66). Bensalemite law dictates that first, a month must elapse between the initial meeting of the potential spouses and their contract to marry. Second, although parental consent is not required, there is a financial penalty if one marries without familial permission. Based on state law rather than on familial policy, any child, who marries despite parental objections, is forbidden from "inherit[ing] above a third part of their parents' inheritance" (68). And last, there are the Adam and Eve pools, a legal institution that requires further consideration.

iii. The Adam and Eve Pools

While the former three laws of marriage—monogamy, a month's lapse between the initial meeting of a prospective couple and their contract or union, and the desirability of parental consent—seem relatively straightforward, the institution of the Adam and Eve pools requires further explanation. Ostensibly, the pools serve as a means of revealing any "hidden defects in men and women's bodies" (68). In order to maintain civility, yet simultaneously ensure that one's potential mate is not sporting any physical deficiencies, abnormalities, or hideousness, "they have near every town a couple of pools, (which they call *Adam and Eve's pools*,) where it is permitted to one of the friends of the man, and another of the friends of the woman, to see them bathe naked." Prior to marriage, one's friend is allowed to view the naked body of one's potential spouse, in order to ensure the physical desirability of one's potential mate.

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[41] 1 Kings 17:24.

Few details of this practice are provided by Joabin, thus giving rise to a number of questions: are these pools monitored? What is the friend's gender? Must all potential spouses submit to the practice? One is left with many questions, but only scanty answers. The sentiment is clear: in order to ensure that marriages are not dissolved because of a lack of physical arousal, barring pre-marital viewings by the potential spouses themselves, one is left with few options—someone must view the potential mate. That being said, a fairly good indication of a person's body can be assessed through certain types of clothing.[42] Moreover, attraction is based not only on one's body. Those things hidden by clothes are unlikely to be the reason for marital complications. As such, what is the reason for these viewings? Unless the chastity of Bensalemite minds is so strong that there is no likelihood of being aroused by the potential mate of a friend, these pools may have a deleterious impact on the islanders' virtue.[43]

The pools are named after Adam and Eve, the two individuals who, in the biblical account, become conscious and ashamed of their own nakedness and thus their own physicality. Bensalem's Adam and Eve pools are a response to our moral knowledge.[44] A complete negation of, or obliviousness to, all one's physical concerns is impossible. Joabin considers the Bensalemite practice in contrast to "a book…of a Feigned Commonwealth, where the married couple is permitted, before they contract, to see one another naked" (68). In Thomas More's *Utopia*, premarital contracting is "solemnly and seriously followed" (61).[45] As postulated in the text, "The bride-to-be is shown to the groom by a responsible and respectable matron; and, similarly, some respectable man presents the groom naked to his future bride."[46] The selecting of a spouse, in this regard seems comparable to the purchasing of a horse; since one is unlikely to buy an animal without first checking its teeth, why marry without first checking the physical attributes of one's future spouse?[47] While the Bensalemites clearly agree with the Utopians' sentiment, the Bensalemites take issue with their method. Thus, one must ask which practice, Bensalem's or Utopia's, is more desirable. Is it better to have an elderly matron view one's naked, potential mate, or is it more desirable to have a friend view one's potential mate in the act of bathing?[48] There is another, unmentioned ramification of observing people bathing, as evidenced by King David who, upon seeing Bathsheba bathing naked, commits adultery with her and then orders Joab to have her husband killed.

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[42] Perhaps, the only exception is the size of a man's penis.

[43] Weinberger goes so far as to suggests that the pools "reinforc[e] the licentious possibilities of choosiness, the love of one's own, and the desire for more. Although the institution is meant to keep the rooster in the coup, it exacerbates the possibilities of adultery and cuckoldry." Weinberger, "Science and Rule" 882; Innes' argument appears to follow Weinberger's. Innes 26.

[44] Paterson argues that the idea of the pools "where men and women routinely look upon each other naked without shame or sin, clearly intends to suggest that scientific progress has also restored that innocence of good and evil which was corrupted or lost in the Fall." Paterson, "Role of Christianity" 428; also see Paterson, "Baconian Science" 170-71. Similar to Paterson's analysis, although taken out of context, Whitney posits that "Immortality through science would be a parallel redemption of nature that repairs the ruins of Adam and Eve's fall." Whitney 384.

[45] Thomas More, *Utopia*, trans. Robert M. Adams 2nd ed. (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1992) II.61.

[46] Ibid.

At the point at which the reader expects the narrator to pose a number of questions to Joabin about Bensalem's marriage customs, and specifically the pools, they are interrupted by a messenger. Appearing to be official and important, the messenger speaks privately with Joabin. After their brief conversation, in haste and with an apology, Joabin departs. In the *New Atlantis*, nothing further is relayed about the Feast of the Family, the laws pertaining to marriage, or the Adam and Eve pools. With Joabin's departure, all the information about Bensalemite domestic life disclosed in the text has been revealed.

The Second Conversation

The following morning, Joabin returns to the narrator. At this meeting, based on the narrator's assessment, Joabin seems happy. Joabin's joy is a result of their interruption the previous day. Presumably, Joabin has a relationship with the governor of the city, as it is by him that Joabin has been informed of an upcoming visit from one of the Fathers of Salomon's House. Apparently, then, there are multiple Fathers of the House, a fact which has not yet been disclosed to the sailors. In addition, no Father has been to visit this city in twelve years, the same amount of time the governor-priest has said that the Fathers spend abroad (58). The impending arrival of such a dignitary is a joyful and solemn occasion. Although the city has been informed that the Father is to arrive in a week, the purpose "of his coming is secret" (69).[49] Based on Joabin's account, it is unclear whether the secret reason for the visit is being kept from the governor of the city, Joabin, the narrator, or all three men. Regardless, the arrival of a Father is accompanied by spectacle and solemnity. Despite the secrecy, Joabin obviously believes that he holds a position of privilege in relation to the Father of the House. Joabin promises to "provide [the narrator] and [his] fellows of a good standing to see his entry." Joabin intends to permit the narrator and the other sailors to view the Father's parade. In response, the narrator says that he is "most glad of the news." Finally, the sailors are to have an opportunity to meet one of the men about whom they have heard so much. From all that has transpired thus far, it is clear that the islanders hold Salomon's House in high esteem. Perhaps the narrator's gladness is a result of having heard so much about the House. Regardless, the Father is set to arrive in a week, and the sailors have been promised a good viewing position from which to watch him enter the city.

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[47] According to biblical tradition, based on Leviticus 13 and 15 and Numbers 19 and 31, "the *mikvah* is a body of natural water (that is, a pool, a river, a pond, a lake, or an ocean) in which a person who has become impure purifies himself or herself by immersion." Kolatch 123.

[48] For a more detailed consideration of the relationship between Bensalemite marriage and sexual practices, and those in *Utopia* see Faulkner 120-121; Weinberger, "Miracles" 109-110; White 180-84.

[49] On the numerical significance associated with the coming of the Father, see White 192-93.

Considerations on the Narrator's Conversations with Joabin

While Joabin provides the narrator with insight into the domestic lives of the Bensalemites, he also indicates, through his critique of European practices, his knowledge of the external world. However, Joabin is not simply a Bensalemite; he is a Jewish Bensalemite. Joabin's discussion of the Bensalemites' marriage and sexual practices occurs in the third person.[50] Although Joabin willingly praises the chastity of the islanders, he does not appear to consider himself one of them. As such, Joabin's account of Bensalemite domestic practices can be considered impartial: Joabin is at once a member of Bensalemite society, yet simultaneously removed from the general Christian culture because of his Jewishness.

The Bensalemites, according to Joabin, view themselves as distinct from the Europeans. The sexual prohibitions on the island are derivative of the decay that the Bensalemites see in Europe. As a response, the Bensalemites have developed a unique and restrictive approach to lust. Bensalem's laws are salient: they demand a one month moratorium between the initial meeting of spouses and the marriage contract, and they set financial restrictions on unsanctioned marriages (68). However, when Bensalem's laws are considered, they do not appear to accomplish their intended end. A one month pre-engagement period is hasty. Within the course of a month, although one can *learn* about one's potential mate, one cannot come to *know* one's future spouse. Further, if a woman is pregnant, it takes more than one month for a fetus to begin to show. As such, the one-month waiting period does not seem to be a matter of prudent policy, but rather a matter of pretense.[51] The Bensalemites choose to believe that they do not enter into marriage lightly.

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[50] Paterson argues that Joabin's use of the third person is intended, by Bacon, to contrast the Father of the House of Salomon's later use of "we." Accordingly, Paterson asserts that Joabin's third person account "might indicate that Joabin is a member of Salomon's House or is associated with it in some way." Paterson, "Baconian Science" 166.

Second, the financial penalty also seems more a matter of pretense than a matter of actual deterrence. Based on the behavior and claims of the islanders, they have "salary sufficient of the state" (41). Further, none of the Bensalemites have exhibited any indication of greed; for them, merchandise, gold, and silver are as one (45). While ensuring that the order of nature and the order of the family is respected to a noble end, financial penalty does not seem to be the means of accomplishing this goal. Limiting the inheritance that a child is to receive upon marrying without parental consent may deter Europeans, but it is unlikely to deter a Bensalemite.

Given the obvious limitations of Bensalem's laws, there must be another explanation for the purity of the Bensalemites.[52] If Joabin is to be believed, and there is no reason not to accept the veracity of his account, Bensalem is the most chaste nation on the earth (66). While the laws serve a practical purpose, ensuring Bensalemite chastity is not as simple as imposing legal impediments. The virtuousness of the Bensalemites must be connected to their "chaste minds." Are the Bensalemites guided by reason?

Joabin's so-called "Jewish dreams" (65) emphasize the rich and divine history of the island. The Bensalemites are a thrice-chosen people: first, they are of the Abrahamic line, as the offspring of Nachoran; second, the island's laws are Mosaic; and last, Bensalem has been chosen by God to receive a divine miracle, as well as all of the Biblical books (47-49). According to Joabin, the Bensalemites occupy a unique position with God; they are divinely selected. Perhaps, it is their religious affiliation, rather than the island's laws, that cause the purity of the Bensalemites.

Therefore, what is to be made of Joabin's account of Bensalemite religiosity and sexuality? Bensalemite religion is essential to the island's wholesomeness. It is notable, however, that Joabin does not fully answer the narrator's first question: whether or not the Bensalemites keep marriage well (66).[53] While Joabin claims that Bensalemites are "free from all pollution and foulness" (66) and are not adulterous, and further implies that they are not polygamists, he does not explicitly answer the narrator's questions. Even if the Bensalemites keep marriage well, it is unclear what the Bensalemites consider a marriage. Furthermore, whether or not the Bensalemites believe in divorce, is also unclear.[54] While the aspects of Bensalemite sexuality which Joabin lauds are important, his silence is equally telling.

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[51] For a detailed consideration of Christian objections to Bensalem's premarital and marital practices, see Paterson, "Baconian Science" 173-79.

[52] In contrast to White (352), in regard to Bensalemite marriage laws, Faulkner argues that "Bensalem practices sexual liberation under a show of restraint, with some channeling by parents and by long run financial calculations." Faulkner 121.

[53] Faulkner also notes that the narrator's essential question remains unanswered. Faulkner 21.

The final aspect of Joabin's revelations is the anticipated arrival of one of the Fathers of the House of Salomon. Finally, the sailors are to see one of the men who is a member of this fundamental Bensalemite institution: "the very eye of this kingdom" (48). Up to this point in the *New Atlantis*, the sailors have been educated in the history, religiosity, policy, and domestic structure of Bensalem. However, Bensalem is inseparable from the House of Salomon. The reader, along with the narrator and Joabin, awaits the arrival of the Father.

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[54] According to Innes, "The reader may at this point notice that Joabin never explicitly denies the practice of adultery and divorce in Bensalem. Although polygamy is denied, there is no direct answer to the narrator's question whether marriage is kept well." Innes 26.

On the appointed day, the Father of Salomon's House arrives in the city. As promised, Joabin is able to "provide [the narrator] and [his] fellows with good standing to see [the Father's] entry" (69). Although the narrator's expectations of the Father's appearance remain unstated, we learn through the narrator that the Father has the physical build of a middle-aged man. While his physical stature may be common, the narrator describes the Father's adornments in detail. His "robe is of fine black cloth, with wide sleeves and a cape." Like the governor-priest, he wears a tippet. His brown hair, with the exception of his ear locks,[1] is beneath a "hat…like a helmet, or a Spanish Montera."[2] The reverend man is earlier described as wearing a Turkish turban which exposes his ear locks (39). Unlike other Bensalemites previously described by the narrator, the Father has a round-cut beard, slightly lighter than his hair. His clothing is excellent and finely adorned. In addition to his clothing and hair, the narrator characterizes a single feature of the Father's countenance: he has "an aspect as if he pitie[s] men" (69). There are two ways to interpret the narrator's assertion regarding the Father: first, he pities men disdainfully because he believes himself superior to them; or, he pities men because he feels compassion for them.[3] Although not explicitly described as such by the narrator, it seems that in manner and appearance, the Father of the House of Salomon is reverend.

In similar manner to a monarch, the Father of the House enters the city with a grand and elaborate procession. He does not walk; instead, he is "carried in a rich chariot without wheels, litter-wise" (69). The Father's cedar chariot, like the mother's traverse at the Feast of the Family (62), is encrusted with precious stones; it is "gilt, and adorned with crystal; save that the fore-end had pannels of sapphire, set in borders of gold, and the hinder-end the like of emeralds of the Peru colour" (69). In addition to the gems, the entire chariot is draped in blue and gold cloth, cushioned with a plush blue fabric, and rugged with many silk carpets. Another of the embellishments on the Father's chariot is similar to one at the Feast of the Family; like the grapes at the Feast, which represent male offspring (63), the Father's chariot is also decorated by a sun. However, unlike the multiple grapes, there is a single sun "of gold, radiant, upon the top" (69) of the Father's chariot. In addition to the sun, there is also a "small cherub of gold" on the roof.[4] Rivaling any European monarch, the Father's chariot is certainly regal.

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[1] According to Leviticus, it is forbidden for a Jewish man to cut his hair except in a particular way: "Ye shall not round the corners of your heads, neither shalt thou mar the corners of thy beard." Leviticus 19:27. According to Jewish law, "It is forbidden to shave off the hair of the temples on both sides of the head, at their juncture with the cheeks at the ears." Ganzfried 4:170.

[2] The narrator is able to distinguish between the hats of different nations. This seems to point to his worldliness.

[3] Drawing from his interpretation of Bensalem as 'perfect,' Simon posits a third possibility: the Father, "'who had an aspect as if he pities men,' represents that spirit of benevolence and edification that Bacon identifies with science." Simon 53; also see White 222-23.

Not only is the Father's chariot prosperously adorned and magnificently decorated, the Father also is accompanied by an entourage. Two footmen, "richly trapped in blue velvet" (69), flank the Father's chariot. Although it is not made explicit by the narrator, since the "chariot [is] without wheels," the reader is led to presume that these two footmen carry the chariot. In addition, two horses, adorned in blue velvet like the footmen, walk in front of, and behind, the chariot. Also walking a distance before the chariot are "fifty attendants, young men all," dressed in white satin, wearing blue velvet shoes and hats with multicolored plumes.[5] Immediately before the chariot go "two men, bare-headed, in linen garments down to the foot, girt, and shoes of blue velvet" (70). One man holds a "crosier of balmwood," while the other holds a "pastoral staff of cedar."[6] The Father's retinue totals fifty-four men—the two footmen, the fifty attendants, and the two men immediately in front of the chariot. In addition, the Father is followed by the notable men from the city: "all the officers and principles of the Companies of the city." As the Father is carried through the streets of the city, he silently blesses the spectators: all the while he "held up his bare hand as he went, as blessing the people but in silence." Not only is the Father's entrance stately, it also is priestly; the Father has the authority to bestow blessings upon the Bensalemites.

Throughout this entire process, the streets remain calm and quiet. The Bensalemites continue to be an orderly and polite people. Despite the importance of the Father, the Bensalemites' behavior is similar to that exhibited when the sailors first enter the city; during the sailors' trip to the Strangers' House, despite being the first foreigners on the island in thirty-seven years, Bensalemites gather on either side of the street, "standing in a row; but in so civil a fashion, as if it had not been to wonder at [them] but to welcome" (41) them. Unlike when the sailors arrive, however, the Bensalemites are not said to raise their arms in greeting. Their behavior is also similar at the Feast of the Family: during the ceremony, the guests "are served with great and comely order" (63). At the entrance of one as noteworthy as a Father of the House of Salomon, an event which has not occurred in twelve years, the "street [i]s wonderfully well-kept" (70), so much so that the narrator likens the Bensalemites' assembly to a military order. As the narrator notes, "there was never any army had their men stand in better battle-array, than the people stood." With discipline, solemnity, and respect, the people have assembled to witness the arrival of this great man. They do not crowd each other, but rather, in dignified fashion, watch the procession.

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[4] Although the significance of the wings may not readily be apparent, wings downwards seem to point to earthly concerns (politics), whereas wings raised seem to point to heavenly concerns (metaphysics). Also, it seems that the House is somehow involved in the foreign policy of the island. The insignia of the Bensalemite King does not resemble the cherub on the sailors' scroll. The recurrent image of the cherub points to a possible connection between the House of Salomon and the scroll which is presented to the sailors when they first arrive in port.

[5] It is worthy of consideration that the Father is accompanied by fifty attendants and the narrator is accompanied by fifty sailors. In the *Republic*, the tyrant has "fifty or more bondsmen." Plato, *Republic* 578e.

[6] Spitz suggests that the Father is "more than a Pope; for he bears both a bishop's staff, symbolic of spiritual power, and a pastoral staff, symbolic of a shepherd who controls and looks after his sheep and who therefore wields temporal power." Spitz 59.

Once the procession has passed, Joabin, who has been watching the parade with his acquaintance, the narrator, informs him that he has been charged by the city to entertain the Father of Salomon's House. As a result, Joabin is "not...able to attend to" the narrator (70). Two points are revealed about Joabin during this interaction: first, Joabin is not an officer or principle of the city's merchant guild, since he does not participate in the procession; and second, Joabin is esteemed by the city, since he has been commissioned to attend to the Father.

An Audience with the Father

After three days have passed, Joabin revisits the narrator. As he previously has informed the narrator, Joabin has been occupied with the Father's entertainment. Having not seen each other for three days, Joabin does not tell the narrator how he has spent the intervening time, nor does the narrator inform Joabin of how he has been occupied. Instead, a brief speech is delivered by Joabin to the narrator about the arrangements for the entire crew, during which the narrator neither comments on what is said, nor interjects. Joabin begins by telling the narrator how the sailors should feel: "Ye are happy men" (70). Joabin does not suggest that the sailors should be happy; rather, he commands them to be happy. Joabin provides a fourfold explanation concerning the sailors' happiness: first, "the Father of Salomon's House taketh knowledge of [their] being" on the island; second, the Father intends to "admit all [the sailors] company to his presence;" third, the Father is to administer blessings to the crewmen; and last, one of the sailors is to be given a "private conference" with the Father. Upon being granted an audience with a Father of Salomon's House, no emotion other than happiness can be expected. Moreover, Joabin has been "commanded" to tell the sailors about the meeting; the sailors have not been invited to appear before the Father, but their presence has been ordered.

Based on Joabin's account of the situation, the Father has learned of the sailors' presence on Bensalem. Exactly when he has become aware of the foreigners is unclear. Perhaps the "secret" reason for the Father's coming (69) has been revealed. Given that no Father of Salomon's House has visited the city in twelve years (69) and no foreigners have been admitted to the Strangers' House in thirty-seven years (45), having strangers and a Father in the city at the same time appears contrived. Are the sailors the "secret" reason for the Father's coming?

Regardless, the Father has authorized a meeting with the crew and ordered a private consultation with one of the sailors, who is to be chosen by the mariners. The meeting is scheduled in two days' time. Since the Father "meaneth to give... his blessing" (70), they are to convene in the afternoon. During the Feast of the Family, the only other instance in which blessings are proffered in the text, the scheduled time for blessings is following dinner, and thus in the afternoon (64). Whether anything further is said by either Joabin or the narrator is not revealed. Readers of the *New Atlantis* can only speculate about the manner in which the sailors spend the two days prior to their meeting with the Father of Salomon's House, and whether or not the sailors spend this time in happy anticipation.

At the appointed "day and hour" (70), the sailors arrive for their audience. The Father awaits the sailors in a "fair chamber, richly hanged, and carpeted." Although he sits "upon a low throne richly adorned," it is not raised. The blue cloth, prevalent during his arrival in the city, adorns the state. In addition, two pages, dressed in white, stand on either side of the Father. As they enter the chamber, the sailors behave as they have been "taught" (71). When and by whom they have been educated in appropriate protocol, is unclear. Suffice it to say, the sailors are aware of the appropriate manner in which to behave in the presence of a Father of Salomon's House.

When the fifty-one sailors enter the chamber, they "bo[w] low" and approach the throne (71). At this point, the Father, who has been sitting, stands. In a "posture of blessing," the Father holds an "ungloved" hand above the sailors. Each of the sailors, one by one, kneels before the Father, and kisses the "hem of his tippet." He, like the governor-priest, wears a shawl (60). However, the governor-priest does not permit the sailors to kiss his tippet (60). Silently and solemnly, the Father blesses each of the sailors. Once the blessing has been completed, the two pages and all of the sailors depart, save one.

The sailor "chosen by [his] fellows for the private access" (71) is the narrator. Although Joabin has said that the selection of the sailor who is to receive the "private conference" is the task of the crewmen, this decision has already been made by the islanders. First, when he "thought good to call the company together" (43) after they are installed in the Strangers' House, the narrator makes himself known to the islanders as a unique member of the crew. And second, it is he who receives the crews' invitation from Joabin on behalf of the Father. Since he has been selected by a Bensalemite to inform the rest of the sailors of their conference, it appears that he also has been selected by a Bensalemite for an audience with the Father. Although the official decision may have been made by the sailors, the de facto decision has been implicitly suggested by Joabin.

The Father of the House of Salomon's Speech

Once the Father and the narrator are alone, they sit. The Father speaks to the narrator in the "Spanish tongue" (71). Since Spanish is the language which the sailors have selected for their first correspondence with the islanders (39), the Father's use of Spanish indicates that he has knowledge of the habits and linguistic preferences of the sailors. The Father begins by personally blessing the narrator. In contrast to his blessing of the crew, where he does not speak, the Father now invokes the name of God: "God bless, thee, my son" (71). Based on the Father's behavior, members of the House of Salomon, like priests and Bensalemite Tirsans, have the authority to invoke the name of God. Once the narrator has been sanctified, the Father offers him the "greatest jewel" that he can give. It is neither money nor merchandise;[7] instead, the Father "will impart unto [him], for the love of God and men, a relation of the true state of Salomon's House." That the Father is willing to disclose the "true state of Salomon's House," suggests that the previous account the sailors have received is incomplete.[8] When the governor-priest first describes Salomon's House, he admits that he is legally obligated to "reserve some particulars, which it is not lawful for [him] to reveal" (51). However, it is unclear whether the governor-priest is himself aware of the "true state" of the House, or whether, as a matter of policy, information pertaining to the House is restricted from the Bensalemites. Recognizing the contrast between the governor-priest's information and that of the Father, the reader plausibly might presume that the forthcoming account must be complete. Somehow, the information that is to follow is indicative of the House's, or at least of this particular Father's, "love of God and men" (71): truth, as opposed to falsehood, is a sign of love of God, while telling men the truth is a sign of love of men. Although not a direct parallel, the Father seems to be echoing a suggestion made by the governor-priest. In his speech about the House of Salomon, the governor-priest states that the mandate of the House is "finding out the true nature of things, (whereby God might have the more glory in the workmanship of them, and men the more fruit in the use of them)" (58). In this speech, the Father has replaced "glory" with "love" (71). For the purposes of expediency, the Father outlines the order of his speech: first, he "will set forth...the end of [their] foundation" (71); second, he will outline "the preparations and instruments...for [their] works;" third, he will discuss "the several employments and functions" of the fellows; and last, he will name "the ordinances and rites which [they] observe."

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[7] At least for the time being.

[8] Paterson, "Role of Christianity" 423-24.

i. The End of the House

The mandate of the House of Salomon, according to the Father, is as follows: "The End of our foundation is the knowledge of Causes, and secret motions of things, and the enlargement of the bounds of Human Empire, to the effecting of all things possible" (71). Salomon's House is guided by a single directive: to effect "all things possible." Purposively, then, the House intends to gain productive knowledge of the natural order. In doing so, it is able to modify, alter, and reproduce things in nature. In *The Advancement of Learning*, Bacon elaborates on this doctrine of study. The task of the natural philosopher is twofold: "the *inquisition of causes*, and the *production of effects*."[9] In order to produce effects, one must understand the processes by which they occur. As such, knowledge of causes is required. Bacon, in his other works, elaborates on causation:

> It is right to lay down: 'to know truly is to know by causes'. It is also not bad to distinguish four causes: Material, Formal, Efficient, and Final. But of these the final cause is far from being useful; in fact it actually distorts the sciences except in the case of human actions.[10]

Although the traditional division of causes is correct, Bacon believes that the application of these categories is deficient. In order to gain true knowledge, man must come to understand forms: "But he who knows forms comprehends the unity of nature in very different materials."[11] Knowing forms requires keeping "a continual watchful and severe eye upon action, operation, and the use of knowledge."[12] Forms seem to be the similarities inherent in the essence of different things. Coming to know a thing is thus inseparable from coming to know the cause of a thing. What the Father has in mind by coming to know "secret motions" (71) is unclear. It may be the assessment of causes that have not yet come to light, the secrets of the divine, or another type of hidden knowledge. Once the cause of a thing has been discovered, man can begin to manipulate the object in question. According to Bacon, "[h]uman knowledge and human power come to the same thing, because ignorance of cause frustrates effect."[13] In order to enlarge man's dominion over nature and thus ensure that man commands nature, man must control and manipulate nature.

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[9] Bacon, *Advancement* II.vii.1.

[10] Bacon, *Organon* II.ii.

[11] Ibid. II.iii.

[12] Bacon, *Advancement* II.vii.5.

ii. The Preparations and Instruments of the House

With the mandate of the House in mind—to "enlarg[e] the bounds of Human Empire, to the effecting of all things possible" (71)—the Father turns to the second aspect of his speech: the "preparations and instruments." A lengthy list of the scientific capabilities of the House of Salomon follows. However, the Father does not explain the uses of all of the experiments, nor does he elaborate upon the effects of the instruments. Clearly, the House of Salomon is dedicated to the reproduction and manipulation of nature. Not once throughout the Father's lengthy account does the narrator interject or question the Father's revelations regarding the House. The reader, on the other hand, has the opportunity to pause and consider the House of Salomon in light of the Father's astounding revelations.[14] Delineating and explaining all of the House's experiments and capabilities is a task unto itself; for the purposes of the present consideration, highlighting a few of the House's abilities suffices.

First, the House "ha[s] divers mechanical arts, which [the sailors] have not; and stuffs made by them: as papers, linen, silks, tissues; dainty works of feathers of wonderful lustre; excellent dyes and many others" (77). Throughout his account of the island, the narrator twice has made mention of the superior parchment used by the Bensalemites: first, the scroll that contains the first communication between the islanders and the sailors, which is "somewhat yellower than our parchment, and shining like the leaves of writing tables, but otherwise soft and flexible" (38); and second, the scroll that is presented to the Tirsan on behalf of the king, which is described as of "shining yellow parchment" (62). Even during the conversion, as the governor-priest notes, Bensalem has access to superior processes of papermaking. Barthomolew's letter is written on "fine parchment," and the Book is wrapped in "sindons of linen" (48). While the superiority of Bensalemite paper may seem a rather trite example, one is led to presume that the islanders have access to the chemicals and materials required for the production of paper.

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[13] Bacon, *Organon* I.iii.

[14] Serjeanston argues that many of the Father's revelations regarding the House of Salomon's technological innovations were being conducted by Bacon's contemporaries. Serjeanston 84-99.

In addition, the narrator has emphasized the Bensalemites' apparel. He has chosen to focus on the textiles and the colours utilized in the locals' clothing, and the fabrics used as adornment: the reverend man wears "a gown with wide sleeves, of a kind of water camelot, of an excellent azure colour" (39); the governor-priest is "clothed in blue...[with] a tippet of fine linen" (44); at the Feast of the Family, "the herald and children [are] clothed with mantles of sea-water green sattin" (62); a Bensalemite messenger is said to wear "a rich huke" (68); the horses and footmen of the Father of the House of Salomon are "richly trapped in blue velvet" (69), while his fifty-attendants are dressed in "white sattin loose coats...stockings of white silk," and shoes and hats of blue velvet (70); the two men who walk before the chariot are dressed in linen with blue velvet shoes (70); at the sailors' conference with the Father, the "two pages of honour [are] finely attired in white" (71); the Father is first described as wearing "a robe of fine black cloth" and having under garments and a tippet of "excellent white linen," and "peach-coloured velvet" shoes (69); and he is next described as wearing "a mantle with a cape, of the same fine black" cloth as he wears in the arrival procession (71). The Bensalemites use of brightly dyed and finely produced fabrics is not limited to their apparel. On Bensalem, fabric is also used as adornment: at the Feast of the Family, the canopy above the Tirsan's chair is "silk of divers colours" (61) and "a fine net of silk and silver" (62); during the Father's entrance into the city, the cushions in his chariot are an "excellent plush blue," and there are "curious carpets of silk of divers colours, like the Persian, but far finer" (70); and during the private meeting between the Father and the narrator, the Father's throne is "richly adorned, and a rich cloth of state over his head, of blue satin embroidered" (71). While the significance of the particular fabrics and colours remain matters of speculation, the Bensalemites clearly take pride in their appearance and appreciate the aesthetic qualities of the materials which they are able to produce.

Medical arts have also developed on the island. According to the Father, the House of Salomon has created a "greater variety" of "simples, drugs, and ingredients of medicines" than those known to the sailors (76). The sailors have certainly benefited from the synthetic drugs of the islanders; upon being installed in the Strangers' House, the sailors are given "a box of small grey or whitish pills" to be taken once before bed, in order to hasten the amendment of the ill (43). Moreover, they have also benefited from the herbal medicines of the islanders. The "scarlet oranges," which are an "assured remedy for sickness taken at sea" (43) and "a preventative against infection" (41), also have aided in their recovery. From a medical perspective, the advancements made by the House of Salomon are likened by the sailors to a "divine pool of healing" (44). While the sailors have been given the pills and the oranges, those two curatives are basic compared to the capabilities of the islanders. "Chambers of Health" are used to "qualify the air as [they] think good and proper for the cure of divers diseases, and preservation of health" (73). Not only are the islanders capable of altering air, they are also capable of altering water:

> [They] have fair and large baths, of several mixtures for the cure of diseases, and the restoring of a man's body from arefaction: and others for the confirming of it in strength of sinews, vital parts, and the very juice and substance of the body. (73)

The "Water of Paradise" (73) harkens back to Joabin's discussion of the Adam and Eve pools (68). Synthetic drugs, herbal remedies, inhalants, and hydroponics are not the only medical advances on the island. In addition to those remedies to preserve health, the House is also able to partake in "resuscitating...some that seem dead in appearance" (74).

Agriculturally, the House conducts numerous experiments, attempting to improve upon, and genetically modify, existing plants. In their "large and various orchards and gardens, [they] do not so much respect beauty as variety of ground and soil, proper for divers trees and herbs" (74). Some sections of the orchards are partitioned "where trees and berries are set [to] make divers kinds of drinks, besides the vineyards" (74). Other sections of the orchards are partitioned to make the "fruit greater and sweeter and of differing tastes, smell, colour, and figure, from their nature" (74). During the Feast of the Family, the Tirsan's chair is decorated with one of these superior plants: "ivy somewhat whiter than ours, like the leaf of a silver asp, but more shining; for it is green all winter" (61). Furthermore, many of their agricultural experiments, such as the oranges, "become of medicinal use" (74). However, the House is able not only to improve upon existing plants, but also to expedite standard growing times and cause growth without seeds (74).

Utilizing the superior fruits, trees, and vegetables cultivated in the House's gardens and orchards, the House studies culinary arts. Although the Father claims he "will not hold [the narrator] long with recounting of [their] brewhouses, bake-houses, and kitchens, where are made divers drinks, breads, and meats, rare and of special effect" (75), his discussion is lengthy: "Wines [they] have of grapes; and drinks of other juice of fruits, of grains, of roots: and of mixtures with honey, sugar, manna, and fruits dried and decocted" (75). They have breads "of several grains, roots, and kernels" (76), and meats "beaten and made mortified yet without all corrupting" (76). It is likely all of the sailors have tasted the culinary delights of the Bensalemites. That being said, only one meal is described by the narrator; on the evening that the six sailors tour the Strangers' House, they are fed a meal "better than any collegiate diet [the narrator] has known in Europe" (43). During the meal, the sailors are given "right good viands, both for bread and meat...also a drink of three sorts, all wholesome and good; wine of the grape; a drink of grain, such as is with us our ale, but more clear; and a kind of cider made of a fruit of that country; a wonderful pleasing and refreshing drink" (43). Bensalemites are not only well dressed, but they are also food connoisseurs.

Bensalemite textile, paper, medicine, agriculture, and culinary arts are advanced. However, the technological prowess of the islanders is not limited to the production of amenities superior to those in Europe. In their "perspective-houses, [they] make demonstrations of all lights and radiations" (77); they can reproduce "all multiplications of light, which [they] can carry great distances, and make so sharp as to discern small points and lines; also all colorations of light: all delusions and deceits of the sight, in figures, magnitudes, motions, and colours" (78); with these optical advancements they have "helps for the sight...[and] glasses and means to see small and minute bodies perfectly and distinctly" (78). Most striking, however, is the House's ability to reproduce optical phenomena: they "make artificial rain-bows, halos, and circles about light...also all manner of reflexions, refractions, and multiplications of visual beams of objects" (78). Notably, the House is capable of creating the optical anomaly that initiates the miraculous conversion of the island: the "great pillar of light; not sharp, but in the form of a column or cylinder, rising from the sea a great way up towards heaven: and on the top of it was seen a large cross of light, more bright and resplendent than the body of the pillar" (47) which breaks into "the firmament of many stars" (48). Using their knowledge of light, the House is capable of having designed and produced this great pillar, this finger of God.

In addition to manipulating and creating optical illusions, the House can control weather phenomena. In "great and spacious houses, [they] imitate and demonstrate meteors; as snow, hail, rain, some artificial rains of bodies and not of water, thunders, lightenings" (73). Following the war between Coya and Bensalem, the great Atlantis is destroyed by a "particular deluge or inundation" (54). In his discussion, the governor-priest accounts for the flooding by ascribing it to "Divine Revenge" (54), a "main accident of time" (55), or "a natural revolution of time" (54). Nature, however, is not the only force capable of causing catastrophic rains; the House of Salomon has the technology to reproduce excessive rains and thus cause an inundation.

In the engine-houses, they have "prepared engines and instruments for all sorts of motions" (79). It is possible that subsumed under the "great number of other various motions, strange for equality, fineness, and subtilty" (80), the House of Salomon has produced a self-propelled vehicle. Such a machine may have been used by the Father of the House of Salomon when he arrives in the city. During the narrator's detailed discussion of the Father's parade, he explicitly notes that the chariot is carried "litter-wise" (69-70). While footmen flank the chariot, and horses walk before and after the chariot, it is unclear who actually carries the chariot. It is possible that it is self-propelled.

In his disclosures, the Father reveals that the House has "engines for multiplying and enforcing of winds" (73). If the House is capable of producing winds, it is highly possible that they are capable of reducing winds. At the start of the sailors' adventure, the reason the sailors become stranded in the Pacific Ocean is a result of the unfavorable winds. The "calms and contrary winds" that prevent the sailors from reaching China and Japan (39) may not have been a matter of chance. The House of Salomon, by design, may have brought the sailors to Bensalem.[15]

Although the House of Salomon has unprecedented technological power, the Father assures the narrator that they "hate all impostures and lies" (80). Since it is possible for members of the House to employ these powers to malevolent ends, there are safeguards in place to monitor their use:

> insomuch as [they] have severely forbidden it to all our fellows, under pain of ignominy and fines, that they do not shew any natural work or thing, adorned or swelling; but only pure as it is, and without all affectation of strangeness.

Any member of the House who chooses to abuse or misuse the House's technological knowledge is shamed by his fellows and compelled to pay a financial penalty.

Having revealed the "riches of Salomon's House" (80), the Father's account of the preparations and instruments is complete. One characteristic of the island has become clear: Bensalem is unlike any other state of its time. Given its vast scientific capabilities, Bensalem is an atypical island. Members of the House of Salomon have achieved an unprecedented level of advancement: this state has the power to alter nature. Although the Father has given his assurances that the power of the House is not used for impostures, the actual nature of the House remains a matter of speculation. In order to understand Bensalem, one must assess the House of Salomon in light of its exceptional scientific powers.

iii. The Employments and Functions of the House

All of the scientific endeavors of the House are undertaken by thirty-six fellows. These men are divided into nine different offices—twelve Merchants of Light, three Depredators, three Mystery-men, three Pioneers or Miners, three Compilers, three Dowry-men or Benefactors, three Lamps, three Inoculators, and three Interpreters of Nature. The structure of the House points to the divided and hierarchical structure of the organization. Each of the fellows has a specific task and a corresponding title. As such, the work is subdivided according to the employment of the fellow. Yet, all of these fellows are working towards the same end: the pursuit of knowledge.

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[15] Paterson, "Baconian Science" 97-98; Weinberger, "Miracles" 108.

International reconnaissance is conducted by twelve of the fellows who "sail into foreign countries" (81). The task of these men has been revealed already by the governor-priest. In his original discussion of the House of Salomon, the governor-priest makes much of the exception to Solamona's prohibitions against international travel:

> Every twelve years there should be set forth out of this kingdom two ships, appointed to several voyages; That in either of these ships there should be a mission of three of the Fellows or Brethren of Salomon's House. (58)

That members of the House are permitted to travel into distant lands is confirmed by the Father. Although both men state that certain members of the House travel abroad, there is a discrepancy in the details of this exemption: the governor-priest claims that every twelve years, two ships, each containing three Brethren, go abroad; the Father states that twelve of the brethren partake in these missions. Although the number twelve occurs in both accounts, the use of the number is inconsistent. The Father remains silent on the duration of the missions; unlike the governor-priest, he does not claim that they are twelve-year tours. Furthermore, the Father remains silent on the number of ships; unlike the governor-priest he does not indicate the number of ships that depart. And last, the Father remains silent on the number of brethren who participate in each of the missions; unlike the governor-priest, he does not state that three brethren participate in each mission. However, unlike the governor-priest who simply states that "Fellows or Brethren of Salomon's House" (59) partake in these missions, the Father indicates which of the brethren are charged with this task: "Merchants of Light" (81). As their name suggests, the Merchants of Light are brokers of knowledge. Their mandate is to bring the light, or intellectual developments of foreign nations, back to the House of Salomon.[16] Both men concur on the basic purpose of the mission. These envoys are sent to other countries, according to the Father, to bring Bensalem "the books, abstracts, and patterns of experiments of all other parts" (81) of the world.

Maintaining the secrecy of the island while traveling into foreign lands requires savvy. While both men point to the required concealment necessary to obtain this end, neither discusses the manner in which this is achieved: the governor-priest is adamant that he "may not" tell the sailors how the brethren are concealed (59); the Father admits that the brethren are concealed, but does not discuss the methods that are employed (81). Having been educated by the Father in the preparations and instruments of the House, one may conclude that technology is essential to the

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[16] As indicated by the cherub insignia on the scroll (39) and on the Father's chariot (69), the Bensalemites value light, or knowledge.

House's ability to "colour themselves under the names of other nations" (59). In order to reproduce the languages under whose guise they travel, the fellows are capable of "rendering the voice differing in the letters or articulate sound from what they receive" (79). Members of the House of Salomon have the power to deceive the auditory and visual senses. By extension, then, it is possible that they can feign the languages of other countries. In order to disguise the bodies of the Merchants, they may use their surgical skills—perhaps, even as advanced as contemporary plastic surgeries (74). Or they may use medicines to alter the form, color, and structure of the body (76). Moreover, the House has the ability to reproduce fabrics (77). International fashions, brought back to the House in patterns, may be created on the island and worn by the fellows when they are abroad. Although no mention is made by the Father regarding the concealment of the Bensalemite ships, the governor-priest does make mention of its necessity (59). Since the House has powers of "delusions and deceits of the sights" (78), it is possible that the ships are hidden by "represent[ing] things near as afar off, and things afar off as near" (78). Despite being in a foreign port, a Bensalemite ship may appear very distant or invisible.

As such, Bensalem's policy of international covert trade in "*Light*; to have *light* (I say) of the growth of all parts of the world" (59), is only possible because of the scientific advancement of the House. Remaining knowledgeable about the rest of the world while remaining unknown is entirely dependent on concealment. The Merchants of Light are the cornerstone of the House of Salomon's intellectual espionage. If the Merchants of Light do not travel into distant lands, Bensalem indeed becomes isolated. The House of Salomon, despite its apparent self-sufficiency, is aided in her own advancement by the knowledge and developments of the rest of the world.[17]

The information with which the Merchants of Light return to the island is used by all of the fellows of the House. First, the patterns and experiments from the rest of the world are compiled; three fellows, called Depredators, collect all of the experiments which are found in books. It is interesting that the official name of these three fellows is derivative of depredation: plundering, robbing, or ravaging. It seems that the task of these men is to glean, from foreign texts, the experiments that are being conducted in other countries. There is a twofold purpose to this process: first, to keep a record, for posterity, of international experiments that are found in books; and second, to attempt to reproduce or expand upon international research.

While the Depredators are mandated to plunder international texts, one might ask who is responsible for compiling materials. Three brethren, called Mystery-men "collect experiments of all mechanical arts; and also of liberal sciences; and also of practices which are not brought into the arts" (81). These fellows are responsible for tangible goods; it is they who compile all of the material works of man.

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[17] Many of the experiments conducted by Salomon's House are inspired by the research conducted by the international community. The House's dependence on the information with which the Merchants of Light return appears to indicate that scientific research cannot be conducted in isolation.

Drawing from the assembled materials, the members of the House undertake unique research. Whereas the Depredators and the Mystery-men are concerned with experiments that have been conducted by others, three "Pioners or Miners" undertake "new experiments, such as they think good" (81). The task of these men may be twofold: conducting new experiments, and conducting experiments compiled by the Depredators and the Mystery-men. Their dual names—Pioneers or Miners—seem to illustrate their assigned task: similar to pioneers, they are charged with forging uninvestigated frontiers; and similar to miners, they are charged with delving into the deeper secrets of nature. One can surmise that the Pioneers or Miners undertake experiments that are in line with the mandate of the House: to better discern "the knowledge of Causes, and secret motions of things" (71).

Once the Depredators collect textual research, the Mystery-men collect the mechanical experiments and the Pioneers or Miners conduct new experiments. Compilers, as they are aptly named, "draw the experiments of the former four [namely, the Merchants of Light, the Depredators, the Mystery-men, and the Pioneers or Miners] into titles and tables" (81). By organizing the data derived from experimentation, the Compilers "give the better light for the drawing of observations and axioms out of them." It appears that the task of these three fellows is to accumulate disparate data and seek coherent patterns so that the information may become useful.

Having prepared the data in a functional manner, three fellows, called "Dowry-men or Benefactors" (81), are charged with determining the productive use of the experiments. It is these men who "draw out of them things of use and practice for man's life, and knowledge as well for works as for plain demonstration of causes, means of natural divinations, and the easy and clear discovery of virtues and parts of the bodies." As in the case of the Pioneers or Miners, having two names points to two functions: as Dowry-men, they are responsible for endowing gifts upon the House; as Benefactors, they make charitable contributions to their institutions. Drawing from the information amassed by the Compilers, these three brethren are responsible for discerning the practical human uses of both domestic and international experiments.

Once the Dowry-men or Benefactors have assessed the practical uses of the experiments, all of the subdivisions of the House meet in consultation regarding the "labours and collection"

(81) of the aforementioned six employments.[18] The Merchants of Light, the Depredators, the Mystery-men, the Pioneers or Miners, the Compilers, and the Dowry-men or Benefactors all seem to comprise the preliminary phase of research within the House. Based on their research, the entire House meets to consider the course that the experiments will take. It is the task of three Lamps "to direct new experiments, of a higher light, more penetrating into nature than the former." According to the governor-priest, the House of Salomon trades in knowledge: "for God's first creature, which [i]s *Light*: to have *light*...of the growth of all parts of the world" (59). The task of the Lamps, as suggested by their name, is to shed light upon nature.

Once the Lamps have developed experiments which probe deeper into nature's secrets, the experiments are conducted by three Inoculators. The name, Inoculator, points to two interpretational possibilities: first, they may be the eyes (oculus) of the Lamps; and second, like those who inoculate, they may cause the flourishing of the experiments. In either case, these three men are charged with conducting the Lamps' experiments and observing the results: it is they who "execute the experiments so directed, and report them" (82).

Even more penetrating than the experiments directed by the Lamps and conducted by the Inoculators, three Interpreters of Nature "raise the former discoveries by experiments into greater observations, axioms, and aphorisms" (82). It is these three men who create cohesive axioms and aphorisms from the experiments of the others. It is they who bring the entire process to culmination: they discern the first principles. Based on their labor, the House is able to effect "all things possible" (71).[19]

The employments of the House point to a hierarchy of research and duties.[20] First, there are the Merchants of Light who trade in the experiments of the rest of the world. Since they are the only men permitted to leave the island, they are the covert spies of Salomon's House. They are responsible for gathering the information pertaining to the development of all the foreign countries. Upon their return to Bensalem, the Merchants of Light provide the material for the employment of the other fellows.[21] Analyzing their discoveries, the Depredators, the Mystery-men, the Pioneers or Miners, the Compilers, and the Dowry-men or Benefactors are the first people who deal with the international materials. However, they are presumably the lowest level of the fellows. Above them are the Lamps, the Inoculators, and the Interpreters of Nature. As discussed, the Lamps shed light on the experiments conducted by the other fellows, while the Inoculators execute the experiments, and the Interpreters of Nature derive use and meaning from the experiments.

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[18] Paterson notes that since there are thirty-six members of the House, a vote can result in a tie. "The absence of any discussion of a means for dealing with this situation might indicate a belief that there will always exist a clear majority about such questions." Paterson, "Baconian Science" 198.

[19] In *The Advancement of Learning*, Bacon states that "for the real and exact form of judgment, we refer ourselves to that which we have spoken of *interpretation of nature*." Bacon, *Advancement* II.xiv.1.

[20] Simon argues that the "merchants of light, depredators, pioneers and inoculators illustrate gradations of the logical arts of inductive invention. The mystery men and benefactors illustrate the logic of analytic judgment. The compilers illustrate the art of memory. The interpreters of nature illustrate the art of transmitting true wisdom." Simon 45.

In addition to the thirty-six fellows of the House, there are "novices and apprentices" (82) who presumably are desirous of becoming fellows. Further, there are a "great number of servants and attendants, men and women" to fulfill the domestic requirements of the fellows. All of the people in the House—the fellows, the novices and apprentices, and the servants—must take an oath of secrecy. Not all of the inventions and experiments are revealed to the Bensalemite people. It is at the discretion of the fellows to determine what they choose to reveal and what they choose to conceal.

A number of conclusions can be drawn about the structure of Salomon's House. First, this is a hierarchical institution: each brother has a task. Second, each ascending level of researcher is dependent on the competence of his fellow Brethren. And third, the House is a closed and self-directed institution: the government of Bensalem does not influence or control the experiments conducted by the House; instead, it is members of the House who choose either to reveal or to conceal their experiments. The House of Salomon, then, is an autonomous institution; it is not dependant on the Bensalemite government. On the contrary, it seems to have supremacy over the state.

iv. The Ordinances and Rights of the House

Given that the Father claims he will disclose the "ordinances and rites [which] they have" (71), one might expect a discussion of the decrees and laws of Salomon's House. Instead, the Father begins by outlining the manner in which the Fathers pay homage to both domestic and foreign inventors. In commemoration of the fabrications conducted by these men, the House of Salomon maintains "two very long and fair galleries" (81). In the first are the "patterns and samples of all manner of the more rare and excellent inventions;" this gallery is similar to a museum that contains the most exceptional and unique works of man. One may only speculate as to the contents of this gallery. In the second gallery are busts of "all principle inventors."

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[21] See Bacon, *Advancement* II.vii.1.

Whereas the first gallery honors the works themselves, the second gallery honors the men who have created them.[22]

Slightly problematic regarding this second gallery is the manner in which the fellows determine the principle inventors of certain experiments. The only man who is honored with a bust and is identified by name is Christopher Columbus; according to the Father, it is he whom the Bensalemites credit with having discovered the West Indies. Also, there is a monk accredited with inventing "ordnance and gunpowder." Yet, how do the Bensalemites determine who has invented "ships,... music,...letters,...printing,...observations of astronomy,...works of metal,...glass,...the silk worm,...wine,...corn and bread,... [or] sugars" (82)? Despite the Father's assurances that this information is determined by a "more certain tradition" than that of the rest of the world, it is difficult to discern who is the primary discoverer of the aforementioned discoveries. This is not the only case in the *New Atlantis* where a Bensalemite claims to have a more coherent historical record than that which is maintained by the rest of the world: when the governor-priest recounts Altabin's war with Atlantis, he cites the "faithful registers of those times" as evidence of the veracity of his claims; despite the "sparing memory" of the rest of the world, Bensalem has "large knowledge thereof" (52). This indeed may be another instance of the records of Bensalem and the ignorance of everyone else. Bensalem has a record of history to which the rest of the world does not have access. In addition to honoring foreign inventors, the House of Salomon honors domestic inventors. Unfortunately, the Father does not reveal the identities of the local inventors, nor does he disclose their works.

In the last nineteen hundred years, each inventor honored with a bust, both domestic and international, also receives "a liberal and honorable reward" (83). In the governor-priest's account of the missions that the House of Salomon conducts abroad, he emphasizes that the brethren reward "such persons as they should think fit" (59); on the other hand, while the Father outlines the employment of the Merchants of Light, he is silent on their philanthropy (81). In the present instance, the Father discloses that the governor-priest's suggestion is correct: each person who has been given a statue has also received a reward from the House.

The Merchants of Light are not only on reconnaissance missions; they also actively participate in directing the research of foreign inventors. By providing remuneration to those inventors who they think are worthy, the House of Salomon is able to encourage and direct which experiments are being conducted in the world at large. As such, the House is a covert patron of intellectual pursuits. Although only twelve Bensalemites—the twelve Merchants of Light—are permitted to travel abroad, the House wields influence over the technological developments in the rest of the world.

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[22] In relation to the galleries, White states, "Invention has, for Bacon, a glory and lustre of its own." White 106.

The rites of the House include daily prayers. Everyday, "hymns and services" (83) are offered in praise of God; the content of the hymns commemorates the covenant between God and the House of Salomon. This covenant has been emphasized already by the governor-priest in his discussion of the House's founding. During that speech, he says that Solamona has instituted "that House for the finding out of the true nature of all things" (58), so that "God might have more glory in the workmanship of them, and men the more fruit in the use of them." During the daily prayers in the House of Salomon, God is thanked "for his marvelous works" (83), those works which are studied by the brethren. In addition to professing their appreciation for God, the brethren request continued divine assistance and "blessing for the illumination of [their] labour, and the turning of them into good and holy uses." The fellows of the House ask for future help and divine providence for the continued discovery of causes and the appropriate use of their experiments.

While the fellows are predominantly occupied with their duties within the House, they also are obligated to perform a number of civil requirements. Although the mandate of the House is to probe nature's secrets, they also are obligated to the Bensalemite people. The duties of the fellows of the House are not limited to their appointments within Salomon's House. The Fathers are required to complete "circuits or visits of divers principle cities in the kingdom" (83). Absent from the Father's discussion is the frequency of these circuits; Joabin has already informed the narrator that it has been twelve years since a Father has been to the city in which the sailors are staying (69). On the one hand, the infrequency of the visits can be indicative of the apathy with which the House considers the Bensalemites. On the other hand, since a Father's arrival is an anticipated and joyous event, their rarity likely adds to the mystery and awe of the House. As such, the Fathers are not burdened often by visiting the city, and simultaneously are able to ensure that they remain esteemed and honored by the Bensalemites.

During these circuits, the Fathers' task is threefold: first, they publish those inventions that they think are good; second, they proclaim divinations; and third, they give counsel. In his discussion of the House's employments, the Father has emphasized that not all of the inventions are made public. All of the members of the House are required to take "an oath of secrecy, for the concealing of those [experiments] which [they] think fit" (82). Since the House reserves the right to conceal some of their inventions, one can only wonder which inventions are revealed and which are concealed.

In addition to making their 'good' inventions public, the Fathers "declare natural divinations of diseases, plagues, swarms of hurtful creatures, scarcity, tempests, earthquakes, great inundations, comets, temperature of the year, and divers other things" (83). Although prophesizing is an impressive ability, noteworthy about the Father's list of divinations is that the House of Salomon has the power to control and to create each of the aforementioned calamities.

In his discussion of the "preparations and instruments" of the House, the Father has disclosed the awesome technological capabilities of the fellows (71). Given his astuteness, the narrator is likely awestruck by the comprehensive nature of their power. All of the natural divinations proclaimed by the Fathers to the people are within the power of the House to control. The natural calamities, "swarms of hurtful creatures, scarcity, tempest, great inundations, comets, [and] temperature of the year" (83) are all within the auspices of the House. In their purview is the power to create swarms. They have "places for breed and generation of those kinds of worms and flies which are of special use; such as are with you your silk-worms and bees" (75). As such, they can generate masses of insects. Once accumulated, they "have also spacious house, where [they] imitate and demonstrate meteors; as snow, hail, rain, some artificial rains of bodies and not of water, thunders, lightnings; also generations of bodies in air; as frogs, flies, and divers others" (73). Not only can they recreate natural weather patterns, but they also can generate animals and insects. To recreate floods, they need only harness the power of their "violent streams and cataracts which serve...many motions; and likewise engines for multiplying and enforcing of winds, to set also on going divers motions." As for the earthquakes, on Bensalem, there are "places under the earth, which by nature or art yield heat" (77). In addition, although the House predicts scarcities, it is unlikely that the members of the House of Salomon are ever to go hungry. Culinary science seems to be a respected skill. They have water which is a supplement for food (75), and orchards wherein they control the growth rates. As such, while predicting possible natural calamities is an impressive occupation, if the House is able to produce what they predict, they are able to control the people, through fear.

Not only do the Fathers divine for the Bensalemites, they also "give counsel… for the prevention and remedy" of their divinations (83). However, if they have the power to bring the aforementioned calamities, they also have the power to prevent them. Given the extensive medical capabilities of the House, not only can they cure disease, but they also can circumvent death (73-74). If the House of Salomon is able to control all of these afflictions, what is the purpose of their divinations?

While neither the Father nor the narrator elaborates on the reasons that the Fathers divine and offer counsel, the purposes of these visits is to augment their authority in the eyes of the people.[23] Predicting and preventing disasters is an excellent way of evoking awe. As a result of their presumed prophetic power, the Fathers become imbued with supernatural power. Once perceived in this way, the Fathers are able to conduct their experiments and not be under the scrutiny of the common Bensalemites. The House of Salomon, as discussed by the governor-priest, is believed to be "the very eye of this kingdom" (48). Based on this analogy, the House is the central institution of the island and the means by which the island acquires knowledge of the outside world. However, the full disclosure that the Father of the House provides for the narrator includes information that has not been discussed previously in the text. The House of Salomon, from the perspective of a common Bensalemite, is an institution shrouded in mystery and worthy of veneration. Truly, the House of Salomon is a technological behemoth.

That being said, it appears that the House is a society within a larger society. The Fathers of the House are isolated from the rest of the population. They conduct their experiments under strict laws of secrecy; not all of the discoveries made by the fellows are disclosed to the populace. When they do interact with the people, they are treated with respect and admiration. This is evidenced in the Feast of the Family, wherein a fellow of the House is permitted to eat with the Tirsan, and by the ceremonial entrance of the Father into the city (63, 69-70). The hierarchy within the House seems to represent a pseudo-democratic approach to science. One fundamental question remains: what is the relationship between the House of Salomon and the rest of Bensalem?[24]

The Father's Closing Remarks

Once the Father finishes his discussion of the House of Salomon as outlined at the beginning of his speech (71), he blesses the narrator for a third time: "God bless thee, my son, and God bless this relation which I have made" (83). At this point, the Father gives the narrator "leave to publish [his account of the island] for the good of other nations." The House of Salomon suddenly has chosen to revoke the Bensalemite laws of secrecy; after nineteen hundred years of anonymity, Bensalem is choosing, once again, to become known. The Father explains that the account should be published "for the good of other nations." In addition to granting permission to publish his account of the island, the Father gives the narrator and the sailors "two thousand ducats."[25] Echoing the governor-priest and the Father, the narrator states that "they give great largesses where they come upon all occasions" (59, 83). However, following the calamity of America, there seems to have been no concern for the good of other nations. What politically has changed? Why is this policy of secrecy being revoked?[26]

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[23] Alternately, Davis argues that given the infrequency of the Father's circuits of the island, Bacon did not intend to have the Fathers take this duty seriously: "Judging from the fact that Bensalem has not seen any of the Fellows for twelve years, Bacon did not intend this education function of the foundation to be taken too seriously." Davis 116.

[24] In response to this question, Whitney argues that "Bacon envisions a science based on cooperation. In this science truth is inseparable from its realization in technology that contributes to the well-being of the general public." Whitney 382.

Considerations on the House of Salomon

The House of Salomon is evidently an institution which is worthy of consideration. There are three pertinent questions which must be considered in relation to the Father's revelations: first, what is the actual international purpose of the Merchants of Light; second, what is the relationship between the House of Salomon and Bensalem; and third, why has the Father given the narrator leave to publish an account of the island. Throughout this consideration, one must continue to keep in mind the technological acumen of the Fathers; the House of Salomon has an unprecedented understanding of nature and access to unparalleled technologies. As such, the ability of the House of Salomon to impact nature—to the "effecting of all things possible" (71)—must not be underestimated.[27]

Turning to the first question, what is the actual international purpose of the Merchants of Light? This issue is complicated by the two men who provide accounts of the Merchants of Light in the text: the first is an abridged discussion by the governor-priest (58-59), who is an officer of the Strangers' House but has no evident affiliation to the House of Salomon; and the second is the current consideration by the Father of Salomon's House, concerning the institution of which he is a part (81). While both men agree on the general mandate of these brethren—to travel into foreign lands, under the guise of other nations, and return to Bensalem with knowledge about the world—they disagree on the particular type of information which is being sought. According to the Father, the Merchants of Light solicit technical information: they procure "the books, abstracts, and patterns of experiments of all parts" (81). Based on the Father's description, the Merchants of Light bring back texts, summaries, and prototypes of the research which is being conducted abroad. While the governor-priest agrees that one of the tasks of the Merchants is to procure writings, templates, and examples of experiments for Bensalem, he avers that the Merchants of Light solicit more comprehensive information:

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[25] Paterson describes the Father's offer of monetary compensation to the narrator, as an example of being twice paid. Paterson, "Baconian Science" 202-203.

[26] Price expresses concern at the rationale behind this alteration in Bensalemite foreign policy. Price 9.

[27] Paterson argues that the House of Salomon is "[t]he most concrete and detailed portrait of the kind of scientific institutions Bacon wished to establish." Patterson, "Secular Control" 464; previously, however, Paterson has argued that "it is very unlikely that the picture of science given in the speech of the Father represents any kind of comprehensive statement by Bacon on the scope or aim of his science as a whole." Paterson, "Baconian Science"186-189.

> knowledge of the affairs and the state of those countries to which they [a]re designated, and especially of the sciences, arts, manufacturing, and inventions of all the world; and withal to bring unto us books, instruments, and patterns in every kind. (59)

What does "knowledge of the affairs and the state of" the world mean? The Father implies that the reconnaissance conducted by the Merchants is for technical developments: those scientific experiments that warrant further considerations. However, the Father's silence regarding the House's "knowledge of the affairs of state" (59), points to a question: are the technical developments of a nation inseparable from its political developments?

While the primary purpose of Bensalem's espionage is to obtain information about international intellectual development, the House also is surveying the political practices of those states which they visit.[28] The House implies that these missions are purely scientific. However, if one considers the type of books that may be brought back—constitutions, legal codes, political treatises—then political knowledge and scientific knowledge seem to be inseparable.[29] It is clear, in both the governor-priest's and Father's respective accounts, that the House of Salomon provides monetary compensation: by "rewarding of such persons as they should think fit" (59), by giving "a liberal and honorable reward" to inventors honored with a bust, and by providing "great largesses where they come upon all occasions" (83). However, what are the occasions that warrant benefaction? The sailors have been given funding for arriving on the island and an advance for publishing an account of Bensalem. If this action is endowed, what else is funded by the House?

By interfering in the economic development of the world, the House of Salomon is capable of covertly controlling and directing international development.[30] In choosing which experiments, arts, or political leaders are sponsored, the House is able to ensure that those developments which they think good, flourish, while alternately, those developments which they think bad, are left to their own devices. Bensalem is not an anonymous observer; Bensalem is a secret director. From this "utterly unknown" island (37), members of the House of Salomon impact and alter the development of other nations.

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[28] On this point, I follow Faulkner, who dubs the work of the House as "industrial and scientific espionage, buying things and rewarding persons, as the governor puts it." Faulkner 130.

[29] For Bacon, pure contemplation is impotent knowledge. In order to have true understanding, one must be able to use one's knowledge. As such, knowledge must be accompanied by works. In this sense, then, all knowledge has political ramification. Human knowledge must be in service to man: it must help alleviate man's estate.

[30] On this point, I diverge from Weinberger, who states that the House does not partake in "the study of policy or government." Weinberger, "Science and Rule" 883.

Turning to the second question, what is the relationship between the House of Salomon and Bensalem? The House of Salomon is venerated by the Bensalemites: according to the governor-priest, it "is the very eye of th[e] kingdom" (48); it is "the noblest foundation...that ever was upon the earth; and the lanthorn of th[e] kingdom" (58). Without a doubt, the House of Salomon is the central institution on the island. Members of the House perpetuate the awe which surrounds their institution; by their infrequent circuits, their divinations, and their proscriptions, Fathers of the House ensure that they are worshipped by the Bensalemites (83).

It is known that Bensalem has a monarchy (62-63). However, the king does not appear responsible for strangers, nor does he appear at all in the narrator's entire account. Bensalem's policy prohibiting foreign visitation, and the control of that restriction, are under the purview of the House of Salomon. When the sailors first arrive in port, they are presented with a scroll, embossed with a cherub and a cross (39). The king's insignia is his own "image, embossed or moulded in gold" (63). The only other image of a cherub in the text is on the Father's chariot (69). Since the image of the cherub recurs on the chariot and the scroll, it points to the relationship between the scroll and the House of Salomon. Control of foreign policy, including the admission of these sailors to the island, is a decision made by the House of Salomon. The House oversees all entrances into, and exits from, Bensalem.

Moreover, it is not the king who decides which experiments are to be published; it is the members of the House. Under the guise of their laws of secrecy, the House of Salomon controls the dissemination of information pertaining to their experiments (82). The House of Salomon is a self-sustained, self-directed, and extremely powerful institution.

Thirty-six Bensalemites have dedicated their lives to the study of nature. These men, it appears, have foregone having children and families in order to be members of the House of Salomon: they are honored by the House for their intellect, and rewarded for their discoveries; they are venerated by the Bensalemites, and treated like royalty. If being a member of the House of Salomon is the greatest honor in Bensalem, surpassing that of the Tirsan and that of the king, the House truly is the political epicenter of the island.

Turning to the third question, why has the Father given the narrator leave to publish an account of the island? Given the involvement which the House of Salomon has in the sailors' permission to land, if not their arrival in port, the Fathers have decided to revoke a nineteen-hundred-year isolationist policy. According to the Father, providing an account of Bensalem is "for the good of other nations" (83). How might the rest of the world be benefited by knowing about Bensalem? There are three possible explanations: first, that Bensalem, being "in God's bosom" (83), might serve as a prototype for all other states; second, that Bensalem, despite being lauded throughout the text, might serve as an example of a corrupt state; and third, that Bensalem might serve as a possible example of a state in which science flourishes. Coming to understand this change in Bensalem's isolationist policy is inseparable from coming to understand Bensalem. As such, how is one to understand Bensalem?

CONCLUSION

New Atlantis concludes unexpectedly. This abruptness poses interpretative challenges for the reader. Presuming that the apparent incompleteness of the text is a stylistic choice, one must assume that Bacon has provided all of the details necessary to understand the text. As such, the reader is compelled to return to Bensalem and to reconsider the events of the narration in light of the lately revealed, awesome, technological powers of Salomon's House. Two fundamental questions guide this consideration: first, how is one to understand Bensalem; and second, what is the *new* Atlantis.

Bensalem

A reconsideration of the three men who have provided the most informative accounts of Bensalem—the governor-priest, Joabin, and the Father of Salomon's House—helps reveal the nature of the island. These three men appear to represent the three primary themes of the text: religion, politics, and science. In his account of Bensalem, Bacon acknowledges that religion, politics, and science are all necessary for life. At the same time, Bacon recognizes that a delicate equilibrium must be obtained between these three competing principles of rule; if this harmony is not maintained and the opposing demands of religion, politics, and science are not adequately balanced, a state will be destroyed. In Bensalem, religion, politics, and science coexist in such a way as to promote the fundamental maxim of the island: "the finding out of the true nature of things, (whereby God might have the more glory in the workmanship of them, and men the more fruit in the use of them)" (58). With the study of nature as the unifying principle of the state, the governor-priest, Joabin, and the Father of Salomon's House each represents a potential obstacle to this end. On Bensalem, however, the potentially conflicting demands of religion, politics, and science have been tempered to serve the ultimate end of the state.

i. Religion and the Governor-Priest

From the time they receive their first communication, the sailors recognize and acknowledge the Christianity of the islanders. The symbol of the cross, embossed on the scroll which prohibits their landing, is deemed a cause for "great rejoicing, and as it were a certain presage of good" (39). The first question which the islanders ask the sailors is not their country of origin or their mission; instead, they inquire into the religious affiliation of the sailors: "Are ye Christians" (40)? By asking this question of the sailors and choosing to use a cross as their insignia, the islanders affirm that they are aware of Christianity. Throughout the text, the sailors affirm and praise the Bensalemites' relationship with God. Upon being installed in the Strangers' House, the narrator reminds his crewmates that while they are on this island, they are "amongst a Christian people, full of piety and humanity" (43). As a result, the sailors must behave as Christians; each man must "look up to God, and every man reform his own ways" (43). According to the narrator, obtaining favor from the Bensalemites is contingent on the sailors appearing to be "at peace with God" (44). The narrator recognizes and capitalizes upon the Christian mercy of the islanders.

Christianity, however, is not one of the fundamental edicts established by Solamona. Prior to the advent of Bensalemite Christianity, Bensalem has a relationship with the Hebraic God. According to Joabin's "Jewish dreams," there is a preexisting covenant between the Hebraic God and the Bensalemites (65): first, there is the genealogical relationship between the Bensalemites and Nachoran, allegedly another son of Abraham, not named in the biblical genealogies; and second, there is the "secret cabala" from Moses. From these two points—the relationship between the Bensalemites and Abraham, and their covenant with Moses—it is reasonable to assume that the Bensalemites have an affinity to the Hebrews.[1] This presumption is confirmed by the governor-priest's discussion of Solamona's founding. Based on the governor-priest's historical understanding, he is "satisfied that [their] excellent king [Solamona] ha[s] learned from the Hebrews" (58). Solamona's knowledge, of and from the Hebrews, may be derived from the books of the biblical Solomon, which, although lost to the rest of the world, are in Bensalem's possession (58). During Solamona's reign, which is prior to the birth of Jesus, the Bensalemites are not Christian; rather, they appear to be Jews, at least to some extent.

Approximately three hundred years after Bensalem becomes isolationist and Salomon's House is instituted, the island undergoes conversion. Prior to Solamona's founding, the island is said to exist in a "happy and flourishing estate" (56). Solamona is remembered as having been "wholly bent to make [his] kingdom and people happy" (56). During his reformation, Solamona does not alter the religious affiliations of the island. Why, then, is Bensalem converted to Christianity? During the conversion, a wise man of Salomon's House not only is present but also mediates the event (47-49); he begins his prayer by beseeching the help of a monotheistic, creative deity (48). It is the "Lord God of heaven and earth, [who] has vouchsafed of [His] grace to those of [the] order [of Salomon's House] to know [His] works of creation and the secrets of them" (48). By the grace of God, the covenant between the House and God, and from the books of God, the wise man is in a privileged position to interpret the miracle of conversion. The Hebraic undertones which permeate the *New Atlantis* are further emphasized at the time of the conversion. Once again, the "Finger" of God has touched Bensalem.

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[1] The Jews trace their lineage through Isaac, as do the Christians, and Muslims trace their genealogy through Ishmael. Since the Jews of Bensalem trace the island's ancestry through Nachoran, a new picture of the major world religions emerges: All four of these traditions—the Jewish, Christian, Muslim, and Bensalemite—claim to be descended of Abraham and thus chosen by God.

There are two interpretations of the island's conversion: the miraculous conversion is, indeed, as Bartholomew testifies, ordained by God (49); or, the miraculous conversion is influenced by the members of Salomon's House.[2] If the conversion is an act of God, it requires no further interpretation than faith: divine providence has chosen Bensalem, an explanation sufficient for the faithful.[3] Yet, the House of Salomon, we learn in the Father's speech, has the power to reproduce works of God—including those manifest during the conversion. Although it is not certain that the House of Salomon has the same technologies at the time of the conversion that it does when the sailors visit the island, it is not unreasonable to assume that the House has interfered in the island's conversion.[4] If this is the case, there are two plausible interpretations of the House of Salomon's involvement in the island's conversion: first, that one of the Merchants of Light discovers Christianity during a mission abroad and brings the religion back to the island; and second, that one or more of the Merchants of Light are actively involved in the advent of Christianity, not only on Bensalem, but in the rest of the world.

In the first case—that one of the Merchants of Light discovers Christianity during his travels and brings it back to the island—there are two explanations for the conversion of the island: first, that Salomon's House believes Bensalemite Christianity is necessary to ensure that the islanders remain attuned to the developments of the rest of the world; and second, that Salomon's House believes Bensalemite Christianity is of direct benefit to the islanders. If Bensalem is converted in order to ensure that it remains current with the rest of the world, the House is preparing for the time when the laws of secrecy are to be revoked; as such, the House permits the conversion of the island in light of future contingencies. In the event that foreigners arrive on Bensalem's shores, as do the sailors of the *New Atlantis*, the island is then prepared to become a known political entity. If the intention behind the island's conversion is preparatory, then it has been successful. Despite the fact that the sailors and the islanders are from very different places, they share a commonality: they are "both parts Christians" (47). On the other hand, the island may have been converted for the benefit of the people. The governor-priest remains silent on the condition of Bensalem in the time between Solamona's reforms and the conversion of the island. Instead, the governor-priest indicates that, as a result of the conversion, the island is "saved from infidelity" (49). The Bensalemites' infidelity can be understood in two ways: religiously, the Bensalemites are faithless; or, socially, the Bensalemites are unfaithful to each other. It is likely that the infidelity of the islanders is a combination of both.[5] Whatever the case has been, the Bensalemites are no longer a faithless people: first, they are Christian; and second, as Joabin reveals, "there are not so faithful and inviolate friendships in the world" as there are on Bensalem (67). If the House of Salomon has chosen to undertake this conversion, it is reasonable to conclude that the House of Salomon encourages the island's conversion in order to remain current with world developments and to ensure that the Bensalemite people are unified by a new common religion and the tenets of Christianity.

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[2] Faulkner 125; also see Innes 19-25.

[3] Davis argues that the thematic emphasis on Christianity "reflects both the seriousness with which Bacon held his own Christian faith and his belief in the Christian religion as a good guarantee of social order;" "Faith, not reason, is the only means by which it can be interpreted." Davis 107.

[4] Renaker makes mention of this question, but does not elaborate upon the resultant possibilities. Renaker 193. Paterson, while considering the possible interference of the House of Salomon in Bensalem's conversion, posits two possible, albeit not mutually exclusive, explanations of the relationship between Christianity and Baconian science: first, "Christianity can be interpreted in a way favorable to Salomon's House and its goals;" and second, "the scientists see Christianity as a possible danger to their project, and choose to introduce it under their own control rather than risk allowing it to enter Bensalem in a form hostile to science and not subordinate to Salomon's House." Paterson, "Baconian Science" 120.

In the second case—that members of the House of Salomon are involved in the international advent of Christianity—the House of Salomon actively, albeit covertly, impacts the course of the rest of the world. It is possible that the House of Salomon has chosen to use its influence to encourage the international acceptance of Christianity.[6] Jesus is remembered for influencing nature, curing the ill, and raising the dead. His impact and popularity is greatly bolstered by his ability to enact miracles. Many of Jesus' natural miracles are under the purview of the House of Salomon's current technologies: Jesus' calming of the storm[7] can be accomplished by the control of wind (73); Jesus' ability to walk upon the water[8] can be explained by altered viscosity of water (73), or by one of the House's "other various motions, strange for equality, fineness, and subtilty" (80); Jesus' withering of the fig tree can be caused by applying the House's knowledge of "arefaction" (73) to their horticultural abilities (74-75); Jesus' fish drought[9] can use the House's experiments on fish (72,75) and its ability to generate bodies (73); and even Jesus' ability to turn water into wine[10] may be explained through the House's experiments in ripening water (76). In addition to his ability to enact natural miracles, Jesus also is able to heal the ill. The medical accomplishments of Salomon's House are extensive. Like Jesus' natural miracles, many of his medical miracles are also under the auspices of the House of Salomon. Jesus is well known for his ability to cure blindness,[11] cleanse lepers,[12] heal paralytics,[13] prevent hemorrhaging,[14] and restore withered limbs.[15] The Father does not discuss the specifics of the House's medical accomplishments, but is adamant that, on Bensalem, health is of primary concern (76-77). In addition to healing, Jesus is said to have thrice raised the dead, and himself been resurrected from the dead:[16] the House of Salomon is capable of "resuscitating...some that seem dead in appearance" (74). Many of Jesus' miracles are rendered explicable when considered in light of the House's power. Moreover, an oddity in the governor-priest's discussion of the conversion is rendered understandable in light of this interpretation: according to the governor-priest, within the ark, which the wise man removes from the water, is a book that "contain[s] all the canonical books of the Old and New Testament...and the Apocalypse itself, and some other books of the New Testament which were not at that time written" (49). How is it possible that the ark contains books of the New Testament that have not yet been written? The only explanation is that Salomon's House has composed these biblical books and has ensured that they are disseminated throughout the world. Based on the aforementioned evidence, it is not unreasonable to assume that Salomon's House has interfered in the birth of Christianity, encouraged its international acceptance, and thus affected the religious trajectory of the entire world.

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[5] Alternately, Innes suggests that "it is specifically infidelity to nature from which Bensalem was saved, and this salvation is extended to any land that will faithfully obey nature through that science which commands her." Innes 19.

[6] On this point, I follow Weinberger's suggestion. Weinberger, "Miracles" 113-125.

[7] Matthew 8:23; Mark 4:35; Luke 8:22.

[8] Matthew 14:25; Mark 6:48; John 6:19.

Regardless of whether or not the House of Salomon has interfered in the international advent of Christianity or simply such upon this island, Christianity has become a dominant aspect of Bensalemite society.[17] Although there are religious overtones at the Feast of the Family, there is no mention of a priest present at the festival (60-64); in addition, although "hymns and services" are said daily at the House of Salomon, there is no mention of a priest in service to the House (81-83). Only one man is identified in the *New Atlantis* as a priest: the governor-priest of the Strangers' House.[18] Since the governor-priest is the only priest introduced in the text, his behavior is an important means of understanding the formal religious structure of Bensalem.

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[9] Luke 5:11; John 21:1.

[10] John 2:1.

[11] Matthew 9:37, 20:30; Mark 8:22, 10:46; Luke 18:35.

[12] Matthew 8:22; Mark 1:40; Luke 5:12, 17:11.

[13] Matthew 9:2; Mark 2:3; Luke 5:18.

[14] Matthew 9:20; Mark 5:25; Luke 8:43.

[15] Matthew 12:9; Mark 3:1; Luke 6:6, 22:51.

[16] Matthew 9:18, 23; Mark 5:22, 35; Luke 7:11, 8:40, 49; John 11:43.

When the governor-priest introduces himself to the sailors, he explains his role as a governor and then his role as a priest: "I am by office governor of this House of Strangers, and by vocation I am a Christian priest" (44). In light of his dual capacity, he offers his services to the sailors "both as strangers and chiefly as Christians." If the order in which the governor-priest presents his dual occupations is maintained, then he is, first, an officer of the Strangers' House, and second, a Christian priest; it is thus fair to presume that his primary allegiance is to the island of Bensalem, and his secondary allegiance is to God. He, however, does not discuss the religious practices on the island: he does not explain his dual role, the nature of the priesthood, or the Bensalemite church. His disclosure involves the conditions of the sailors' stay, an account of the conversion at the request of the sailors, a discussion of the historical decline of nautical travel, an explanation of the war between Bensalem and the great Atlantis, and an outline of Solamona's reforms, also at the request of the sailors. While he willingly discloses his historical understanding of the island and the world, including his own beliefs on the aforementioned subjects, the governor-priest does not expound his theology. After the initial confession of his Christianity, the governor-priest only once refers to his vocation. In response to the sailors' gratitude, he requests "a priest's reward: which is [the sailors'] brotherly love and the good of [their] souls and bodies" (46). In response to the sailors' question pertaining to the conversion of the island, the governor-priest quotes Scripture: according to the governor-priest, the sailors' question "sheweth that [they] first seek the kingdom of Heaven" (47).[19] Otherwise, nothing in the governor-priest's behavior suggests that he is a religious man. Unlike the Tirsan, who blesses his children (64), and the Father of Salomon's House, who blesses the people (70), the sailors, and the narrator (71), the governor-priest never blesses the mariners. Moreover, in response to the sailors' statement that Bensalem appears to have characteristics similar to "divine powers and beings," the governor-priest smiles and mocks their suggestion (51).

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[17] Paterson, "Role of Christianity" 438.

[18] I follow Faulkner's analysis of the governor-priest. Faulkner 124-125; also see Spitz, who claims that the governor-priest "is at best...paradoxical...and at worst a caricature." Spitz 53.

[19] Matthew 6:33.

The governor-priest appears to be a priest tempered by Bensalemite practices.[20] His concern is with the condition of Bensalem; he reveals the history and policy of the island in great detail, but he does not discuss God, except in relation to the island. According to Bacon, in his *Essays*, the fruits of religion are many:

> As for the fruits of those who are within [the bounds of religion], it is peace, which containeth infinite blessings; it establishes faith; it kindleth charity; the outward peace of the church distilleth into peace of conscience.[21]

The potential benefits of religion seem to be evident on Bensalem: Bensalem has enjoyed nineteen hundred years of peace; the islanders manifest "such humanity, and such a freedom and desire to take strangers as it were into their bosom" (60); and, they are a calm and orderly people (41,62,70).

Religion, despite its many advantages, is also subject to drawbacks. Elsewhere, Bacon states that "[t]he greatest vicissitudes of things amongst men is the vicissitudes of sects and religion."[22] Of all the mundane things that are subject to change, nothing is more susceptible to revolutions than religion. The danger of religion is found in extremes: first, religious zealotry; and second, in the picking and choosing of which religious edicts to follow.[23] Moreover, there is another equally pernicious danger: quibbling over Scripture. And last, religion is often in opposition to politics. According to Bacon, "learning hath carried the priesthood, which ever hath been in competition with empire."[24] Since religion, despite its potential benefits, is often a cause of political turmoil, Bacon is adamant that "the laws of charity and of human society" must not be defaced in the name of religion;[25] these four tendencies must be tempered, as they are on Bensalem. Based on the type of religion which is practiced on Bensalem, Bacon points to his understanding of the appropriate place of religion within a technological republic; religion, then, must be a means of ensuring the unity of a state, not the subject of disunity and eventual decay.[26]

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[20] I owe much of my understanding of Bensalemite Christianity and Bacon's understanding of religion to Lampert, *An Advertisement*; Paterson, " Role of Christianity" 419-442; also see Paterson, "Baconian Science" 8-39, 184, 237-47.

[21] Bacon, *Essays* "Of Unity in Religion" 8.

[22] Ibid. "Of the Vicissitudes of Things" 148.

[23] Ibid. "Of Unity in Religion" 8.

[24] Bacon, *Advancement* I.viii.4.

[25] Bacon, *Essays* "Of Unity in Religion" 9.

[26] Along this line of argument, Innes suggests that "whether the dreams of Christians or of Jews, [they] are tolerated and perhaps even encouraged if they facilitate the conditions [desired by the regime]. Anything

Understood in this way, Christianity must be in service to the state. Bensalemite Christianity appears to tend to the needs of the island, rather than to the needs of God.[27]

ii. Politics and Joabin

If one topic is notable by its absence in the *New Atlantis*, it is politics.[28] Very little is revealed about the details of government on the sailors' ship, on Bensalem, or in the House of Salomon. Evidenced by their tendency to deliberate (38, 39), the sailors seem to function, at least to some extent, democratically. Although not all of the sailors may partake in conversation, conversation does occur; consequently, it is reasonable to presume that aboard the ship, some of the sailors consult on the course that the ship is to take. Three men aboard the vessel are identified as unique from the rest of the crew: the mariner who "present[s] himself somewhat afore the rest," to receive the islanders' scroll; the second foremost man who converses with the reverend man (40); and the narrator who identifies himself when he chooses to speak with the sailors (43-44), by his relationship with Joabin (64-69, 70), and by his private audience with the Father of Salomon's House (70-83). In addition, there are the two sailors who are invited to the Feast of the Family and who immediately report to the crew. So long as the sailors remain a unified group upon the island, they have democratic leanings.

Bensalem is, and has been, a monarchy (62-63). Two historical Bensalemite kings are identified by the governor-priest: Altabin, who repulses the Coyan invaders, is, according to the governor-priest, "a wise man and a great warrior" (53); and Solamona, who "desir[es] to join humanity and policy together" (57), and "whose memory of all others [is] most adored" (56). Although Bensalem has a reigning king at the time of the sailors' arrival, as is revealed during the Feast of the Family, he is not identified, nor is he introduced to the sailors (62-63); the only official monarchical function mentioned is a king's duty to encourage the propagation of his

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which might threaten these conditions, however, e.g., evangelism or missionary zeal, or over attention to doctrine, is suppressed." Innes 19.

[27] Contrarily, evidenced by Bacon's Bensalem, Simon argues that "[w]ith the intellectual discipline of science, man can conjoin the kingdom of God with the domain of man." Simon 56.

[28] Regarding the political structure on Bensalem, Innes notes, "We see the effects of government but not the mechanics, the agents but not the authority. There is some faceless and nameless authority, perhaps the state, which seems to know where people are and what they are doing and is able to call them away in the midst of their business." Innes 13.

subjects (62).[29] In addition to being a monarchy, Bensalem also possesses a complex, bureaucratic organization: there is a Conservator of Health in the city in which the sailors land (40), who never visits the sailors to examine the ill; there are officers of the state of varying rank (39, 40, 41); there are servants (39); there are notaries (41); there is a governor-priest of the Strangers' House (44); there is a governor of each city on the island (61); there are taratans or heralds (62); and there are "officers and principles of the Companies of the city" (70).[30] Although it is evident that Bensalem maintains a strict hierarchy, the details of the political structure of the island are never revealed.[31]

Only one living Bensalemite, Joabin, is identified by name and praised for his wisdom.[32] This is the same man with whom the narrator has formed a relationship: "the man [i]s a wise man, and learned, and of great policy, and excellently seen in the laws and customs of that nation" (65). Like the governor-priest, Joabin is identified by both his occupation and his religion: Joabin is a merchant-Jew (65). Joabin's Judaism makes him distinct from the Christian Bensalemite regime.[33] Throughout his account of the island, Joabin uses the third person; as such, he can be understood to be both immersed in, and removed from, Bensalemite culture. Since his account is not tied to the religious practices of the island, it is less biased than that of the governor-priest. Although Joabin is said, by the narrator, to be knowledgeable in politics, the conversation which the narrator chooses to retell does not include topics of foreign policy; it is about religion and the Feast of the Family, both matters of domestic concern. Joabin, not the governor-priest, expounds upon his own theology. Joabin, not the governor-priest, reveals the details of Bensalemite marital and sexual practices. Further, Joabin is knowledgeable in the sexual practices of the rest of the world.[34] Since Joabin is the only living man identified by the narrator as wise, his wisdom is shown through his understanding of the sexual and marital practices of Bensalem.

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[29] Regarding the absence of the reigning Bensalemite King, Paterson "suggests that the king is a kind of symbol of patriotism or a figure who provides a sense of continuity with Bensalem's past." Paterson, "Baconian Science" 152.

[30] Faulkner 133.

[31] Price 8.

[32] Weinberger argues that "Joabin's speech is the most important in the *New Atlantis*." Weinberger, "Science and Rule" 881.

[33] According to Davis, it is Joabin's Judaism which is essential to understanding his character. Davis argues that Joabin's "moderate semitism was necessary to enable Jews to meet Bacon's tests on entry to his ideal society, and also to provide against conflict between Christian and Jew, but more broadly significant in the connection between this image of a Christianized Jewry in an ideal society and the notion of the conversion of the Jews as a precursor of the latter day glory and, accompanying it, the Great Instauration, or restoration of man's pristine dominion over nature." Davis 113.

Drawing from the account that he has received from the two sailors who have been invited to the Feast of the Family, the narrator asks Joabin three questions: "what laws and customs th[e Bensalmites] ha[ve] concerning marriage; whether they ke[ep] marriage well; and whether they [a]re tied to one wife" (66). Despite his extended absence from his own family, noteworthy in regard to the narrator's questions is his inquiry into the domestic relationships of the islanders. Joabin answers the narrator's questions by providing a contrast between European sexual practices and those of the island. From the narrator's speech to the sailors, it is evident that the sailors are not chaste men. In the past they have been subject to vice and previous indiscretions (43-44).

Joabin's response reveals more than the practical laws of marriage; his answers expose a deeper understanding of the Bensalemite people. According to Joabin, "there is not under the heavens so chaste a nation as this of Bensalem" (66). Not only are the Bensalemites chaste in body, but they are also pure in mind (66). Bensalem has not permitted any sexual liberation: "there are no stews, no dissolute houses, no courtesans, nor anything of that kind" (66). Bensalem has prohibited the availability of sex outside the bonds of marriage. Marriage is the cornerstone of the Bensalemite state. Accordingly, marriage ensures that the Bensalemites remain loyal to the longevity and prosperity of the island.[35] The Christian beliefs of the island serve as a means of ensuring domestic prosperity. In light of the focus on families, the greatest honor a Bensalemite male can achieve, one which places the island's king in his debt, is to beget many children. Procreation, and specifically the promotion of large and cohesive families, is the subject matter which Joabin discusses.

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[34] Lawrence Lampert argues that Joabin's knowledge of international practices suggests that he has left Bensalem; as such, Lampert concludes that Joabin is a retired Merchant of Light. Moreover, Lampert argues that Joabin is the secret ruler of the island. Lampert, *Nietzsche and Modern Times* 31-34, 58-60. Paterson argues that Joab is the actual ruler of the island. Paterson, "Baconian Science" 160-161, 166, 206-10, 260. Weinberger argues that "Joabin's comprehensive wisdom must be the source of the true rule of science." Weinberger, "Science and Rule" 883-84. Similarly, Spitz elaborates on the relationship between Joabin and Socrates. Spitz 56-59.

[35] In *The Advancement of Learning*, at the beginning of the second book in his dedication to the king, Bacon notes the importance of foresight in relation to one's descendants. Although this is clearly taken out of context, as he is writing to the king, Bacon's assessment is equally applicable to any parent: "those which are fruitful in their generations, and have in themselves the foresight of immortality in their descendants, should likewise be more careful of the good estate of future times, unto which they know they must transmit and commend over their dearest pledges." Bacon, *Advancement* II.1.

Joabin has overcome the limitations of his biblical namesake, similar to the way in which the governor-priest has overcome the limitations of the European priesthood: Joabin obeys the commands of the Fathers of Salomon's House; he extols rather than belittles the sanctity of his people's marriages; and he serves the Fathers of Salomon's House, not those rulers whom he deems worthy as individuals. The Bensalemite Joabin has conquered the character limitations of his historical predecessor. Unlike Joab, who has been discussed previously,[36] Joabin is loyal to the island of Bensalem. It is not a particular king, or a particular father of Salomon's House, whom he willingly obeys. Rather, the Bensalemite Joabin honors the office. It is the office, not the man, who ought to command respect. In this way, the Bensalemite Joabin has surmounted the love of one's own which plagued the Israelite Joab: Joab avenges the murder of his brother; he disregards the bonds of marriage for King David; and he kills in the name of his King. However, to David's son, the chosen successor, Joab refuses to be loyal. Joab is limited by his personal feelings towards a given individual. His political actions are encumbered by his affection for, or dislike of, the man who is in power. Since David's choice of heir, Solomon, is against the rules of primogeniture, Joab refuses to be loyal. Bensalem's Joab, on the other hand, is loyal to his state.

iii. Science and the Father of Salomon's House

For Bacon, science holds hope for the future. At the core of Bacon's project rests the pursuit of science. As the father of Salomon's House states, the House is mandated to study nature for the relief of man's estate: "The End of our Foundation is the knowledge of Causes, and the secret motions of things; and the enlarging of the bounds of Human Empire, to the effecting of all things possible" (71). Coming to know nature, according to Bacon, is inseparable from being able to reproduce, modify, and alter nature. Scientific study is necessarily accompanied by productive works, for the benefit of man. The movement which Bacon is founding is, no doubt, an object of fear for many of his contemporaries. Hence, Bacon must encourage the acceptance of science and simultaneously disabuse people of their fears: on the one hand, Bacon unabashedly advocates the pursuit of science; on the other hand, he cautions against the potential ramifications of the potential abuse of scientific knowledge. Bacon fosters science, and yet tempers the scientists.[37] Unbounded power over nature can have some dangerous effects.

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[36] See chapter six of this thesis.

[37] Alternately, Davis argues that "the philosophers of the New Atlantis may not rule in any clearly expressed sense, but...they retain the power of technological innovation and with it the capacity to alter the

Daedalus, according to Bacon in *On the Wisdom of the Ancients*, epitomizes the complications posed by men of science to the polity.[38] According to Bacon's interpretation of the ancient fables, "[t]he *Wisdom* and industry of Mechanics, and those illicit Artifices and depraved distorted uses, the ancients shadowed out under the person of Daedalus, a man most ingenious but execrable."[39] Daedalus' genius rests in his ability to command nature, while his repulsiveness is seen in his envy and pride. Envy dominates the psyche of "excellent artisans." Those unlawful things for which Daedalus is remembered involve the murder of a rival student, providing a contraption for bestiality, and constructing a labyrinth to conceal the grotesque offspring of the unlawful union. That being said, much is owed to the uses of mechanical arts, "since many things for the apparatus of Religion and the grace of Civil things, and for the culture of life in general, is collected from their treasury." Human life—religious, political, and cultural—is impacted by, and dependent upon, the discoveries of the sciences. Unfortunately, "from the same fountain spring instruments of Lust, and even the instruments of death...the most sought after poisons and tortures of war and such pests" as are found in the sciences. Applications of technologies are decided upon by the scientists. Consequently, "the *Mechanical* Arts are such as to have ambiguous uses, and both toward the harm and the remedy." So, how does a state, mandated to probe the secrets of nature, yet ensure that the scientists are constrained and that mechanical arts are used for beneficent ends?

Bensalem's House of Salomon has policies in place to ensure that its scientific discoveries are not abused. However, it is not policy, but rather vanity which, according to Bacon, best accomplishes this end: "if the truth be told, [scientists] are not so happily constrained with the bridle of the Laws, as refuted by their own vanity."[40] Fathers of Salomon's House are worshipped like kings and priests by the islanders. As a result of their pride, they are loyal to the people: members of Salomon's House believe that they are needed and revered by the islanders and, as a result, behave accordingly.[41] Consequently, Bensalemite science fuels the political

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conditions of life, if not the structure of society." Davis 120; on this point, I follow Paterson, "Secular Control" 457-59.

[38] On this point, I follow Lampert, *Nietzsche and Modern Times* 34-39; also see Paterson, "Baconian Science" 58-63, 245-47); and Patterson, "Secular Control" 471-476, 439-442.

[39] Bacon, *On the Wisdom* "Daedalus, or the Mechanic" 68. All references in this paragraph are to this chapter.

[40] Ibid. 71.

[41] According to Paterson, the rule of the scientists does not rest on the "benevolence of scientists *qua* scientists, but rather on an argument that the good of scientists requires a certain degree of attention to the

regime and the religious adherences, and in turn is tempered by the political edicts and the religious beliefs of the island—namely, the laws of secrecy and Christian charity.

iv. Interpreting Bensalem

This brings us to a crucial consideration: how is one to understand the Bensalemite people? We are told repeatedly that they are happy. Although they remain ignorant of the true nature of the House and thus the potential power of their island, their ignorance is essential to Bensalemite stability. If the people were aware of the actual capabilities secreted by the House, they may desire to conquer the world. So long as they remain in the dark, they are content with the world that the House has constructed for them: a world that is in constant danger of destruction, and simultaneously provides the comforts of family and honor. For their security, there is a king, who ensures that they are prolific and adequately rewarded. However, this king does not rule the island; he is debtor to the people. Surprisingly absent from the narrator's account, he too is ignorant about the House's capabilities. At the same time, the Fathers of the House are indebted to the people. It is the reverence which is bestowed upon the House that satiates the pride and tempers the envy of these scientific men. The reason that all of the aforementioned individuals—the Fathers of the House, the governor-priest, Joabin, the Bensalemite king, and the people—continue to maintain Solamona's reforms is the reverence with which he is remembered. Solamona's memory and a long history of inculcation ensure that every Bensalemite, regardless of rank, maintains the laws of secrecy and fosters the pursuit of science.[42]

On Bensalem, the relationship between religion, politics, and science is complicated. Each of these competing ideologies has been tempered for the benefit of the state. On the one hand, it is clear that Bensalem is a united nation. According to the narrator, Bensalem is a "happy and holy ground" (45), which is "a picture of [the sailors'] salvation in heaven." This sentiment is echoed by the Bensalemites: Joabin claims that the island "is the virgin of the world" (66); and

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good of society;" moreover, "[t]he self-control of the scientists, based on a clear understanding of their own self-interest, is the only possible way to control the application of scientifically generated power." Paterson, "Secular Control" 477, 480.

[42] Along this line, Faulkner emphasizes the orderliness of the state: "Bensalemites are orderly to a degree that is extraordinary, absurd, even sinister....Everyone does what he is ordered....All this order is more remarkable since the relation of king, city, nation, state, and scientist is not clarified." Faulkner 127-128.

the Bensalemites affirm their own happiness at the Feast of the Family (63). Based on the accounts of the island provided in the text, Bensalem is ostensibly a perfect regime.[43]

On the other hand, it is evident that in order to ensure the longevity of the island, Bensalem has made political choices.[44] As such, one must consider the island's character in light of the warning that Critias presents regarding regimes. At the conclusion of the dialogue bearing his name, Critias states:

> To whomever has eyes to see they appeared hideous, since they were losing the finest of what were once their most treasured possessions. But to those who were blind to the true way of life oriented to happiness it was at this time that they gave the semblance of being supremely beauteous and blessed. Yet inwardly they were filled with an unjust lust for possessions and power.[45]

While Critias' castigation is directed towards ancient Atlantis, it is equally applicable to any regime, including Bensalem. Is Bensalem beauteous? Or, is Bensalem actually hideous? Beneath the veneer of political perfection on Bensalem, there are a number of questionable aspects of the island which warrant further consideration.

First, not once, in the entirety of the text, are the Bensalemites called citizens. For those who have democratic or republican leanings, this may be disconcerting. Citizenship obtains ideas of equality, freedom, and political duty; Bensalem does not appear to manifest these characteristics. First, the island is clearly hierarchical: the reverend man's behavior is dictated by his station (40); the Tirsan is honored based on "discretion, according to the number and dignity of the family" (63); and members of Salomon's House are granted unique honors (63). Inequities based on the proper ranking of the virtues are not bad policies. If honor and dignity are determined from admirable factors, then the Bensalemites recognize those who are worthy. Second, Bensalem is not a transparent society: laws of secrecy shroud every level of the island; throughout his entire account, the narrator and his fellow sailors are tethered (45); the governor-priest informs the sailors that there are "laws of secrecy which [they] have for [their] travellers" (46); the governor-priest's account of the island is truncated by those things "which it is not lawful for [him] to reveal" (51); further, the governor-priest also refuses to disclose the manner in which Bensalemites traveling abroad hide their true nationality (59); and last, the House of

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[43] Simon argues that "Bacon portrays the island as a perfect social order." Simon 46.

[44] Faulkner, diverging from Weinberger, concludes "that Bacon understands science itself to be a tool of domination;" thus, the *New Atlantis* "parades the scientific and economic improvements to come, while it veils the dangerous division and revolutions, in morals and religion as well as politics, also to be undergone:" as a result, "the story promises good things and hides harsh things." Faulkner 113, 116, cf. 124.

[45] Plato, *Critias* 121b.

Salomon determines "which of the inventions and experiments which [they] have discovered shall be published, and which not" (82). Only two topics of consideration are not constrained by laws of secrecy: the governor-priest's account of the conversion (47-49) which may be a fiction, and Joabin's account of Bensalemite marriage laws and sexual prohibitions (66-68). Bensalemite laws of secrecy conceal the aspects of their society which they are unwilling to reveal to their foreign guests and to their own people.

The second contentious issue pertaining to Bensalem is the apparent lack of passion or emotion among the people.[46] The Bensalemites are not sexually liberated. On the contrary, they are constrained by the laws of marriage and the unavailability of premarital sex. Throughout the text, the narrator notes the orderly and calm behavior of the islanders (41, 63, 70). This orderliness may be interpreted as docility. Indeed, the reader is encouraged to recognize the sheep-like nature of the Bensalemites (47). That being said, the Bensalemites, despite their apparent lack of passion, are considered by the narrator's account to have "excellent poesy" and also to partake in "music and dances, and other recreations after their manner" (64). The most compelling insight into the islanders is provided by Joabin, who claims that "there is nothing amongst mortal men more fair and admirable than the chaste minds of th[ese] people" (66). If the Bensalemites' minds are chaste and thus governed by reason, there is no reason to assume that they lack passion. Instead, one might presume that their lower desires have been channeled into higher pursuits: namely, family, poesy, music, and science.

There is a third aspect of Bensalemite society which must be questioned: the manner in which they actually ensure their secrecy. According to the governor-priest, the only assurance the islanders have of continued international ignorance of their existence is that an account of the island seems incredible and certain to be taken "but for a dream" (57). As a matter of policy, this is absurd. There must be another way in which the Bensalemites ensure their continued anonymity.[47]

Regardless of the position one takes concerning Bensalem—whether one believes it is an ideal republic or a decaying state—the island is worthy of study: "[t]here is no worldly thing on earth more worthy to be known than the state of that happy land" (46). Both the benefits and deficiencies of Bensalem depict a state in which Bacon's scientific project flourishes. As such, the advent of science is not without potential compromise. All levels of Bensalemite society are cultivated to conform to the island's mandate:[48] this means that a laymen must ensure that the familial bonds are strong; the officers must ensure that the laws of secrecy are maintained; the king must ensure that his people are fecund; Fathers of Salomon's House must control their pride and envy, and seek gratification from each other and the people; and all Bensalemites must adhere to the rules and regulations imposed on them by the complex organization of their state. Solamona has successfully managed to "to set one affection against affection, and to master one by another."[49] From this perspective, then, Bacon has provided a potential prototype of a technological regime.[50] While one need not accept all aspects of the Bensalemite society, one aspect is worthy of respect: Bensalem truly is unified in purpose. All levels of the state are dedicated to the study of nature, in one way or another, whether or not the people are aware of this good.[51] Considered in this light, the House of Salomon's decision to revoke the laws of secrecy and publish an account of Bensalem is "for the good of other nations" (83).

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[46] Weinberger scathingly argues that the Bensalemites are "creepy," so much so that they "appear to have been denatured," or even "lobotomized." Weinberger, "Miracles" 107.

[47] Weinberger, in his introduction to the *New Atlantis*, suggests that those "strangers unwilling to stay, or those judged unfit to stay, must have been restrained by force or killed" xvi.

What is the New Atlantis?

Why does Bacon decide to call this book the *New Atlantis*? Since the *New Atlantis* is not an obvious title for a book about Bensalem, towards what is Bacon pointing his readers? *New Atlantis* is composed of two words—new and Atlantis. Similarily to the *New Organon*, which is Bacon's innovative response to Aristotle's *Organon*, Bacon's *New Atlantis* harkens back to the Atlantan Platonic dialogues—the *Timaeus* and the *Critias*.[52] While the content of these two Platonic dialogues has already been discussed at length,[53] a number of essential points warrant further consideration. With the exception of this unlikely title, all references to the old Atlantis in the text refer to a great war: the combatants are old Bensalem—prior to Solamona's reforms—and old Atlantis—prior to her destruction. In the governor-priest's account of the old Atlantis, the American continent is a combative and imperialistic power bent on conquering the world. Over the course of ten years, Atlantis, in conjunction with her allies Tyrambel and Coya, partakes in two missions: Tyrambel travels to the Mediterranean, while Coya attacks Bensalem. Whereas the *Critias* and *Timaeus* are concerned with the war between ancient Athens and the old Atlantis, the governor-priest is concerned with the war between ancient Bensalem and the old Atlantis. In both the Platonic and the Baconian accounts, there is discussion of a great war, one which destroyed the Atlantan Empire.

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[48] On this point, I follow Innes: "Christian appearance conceals what may be called a civil religion, a religion which is subordinate to the needs of this uniquely scientific society." Innes 24.

[49] This approach to the problem of factions is echoed by James Madison in "Federalist 51."

[50] Weinberger, drawing from the etymological origins of 'Bensalem' suggests that "Bensalem is a complete and perfected model of the end of Bacon's great instauration." Weinberger, "Science and Rule" 876.

[51] Faulkner calls this "a comprehensive new state of mind." Faulkner 136.

[52] According to White, "The *New Atlantis*...is the only Baconian work, certainly the only major Baconian work, which is directed primarily against Plato....The *New Atlantis* is a rewriting of a Platonic myth, and a rewriting clearly intended as a refutation." White 112; Paterson follows White on this point. Paterson, "Baconian Science" 94, 247-60; also see Lampert, *Nietzsche and Modern Times* 42-48.

[53] See chapter four of this thesis.

The first point of contrast between the old Atlantan dialogues and Bacon's *New Atlantis* is that of ancient Athens and ancient Bensalem. Based on the Platonic account, the old Atlantis is juxtaposed to ancient Athens, whereas in the Baconian account, the old Atlantis is juxtaposed to ancient Bensalem. Ancient Athens, like ancient Bensalem, is attacked by the Atlantans. While the governor-priest is willing to confirm that an Atlantan expedition sails to the Mediterranean, he does not confirm that "the ancient Athenians...ha[ve] the glory of the repulse" (53). Critias, on the other hand, affirms and glorifies ancient Athen's liberation of the region.[54] The governor-priest does admit that "certain it is, there never came back either ship or man from that voyage" (53): none of the Tyrambelians return from battle. "[G]reater clemency" is bestowed by Bensalem: the Coyans are permitted to return home. Ancient Athens, unlike ancient Bensalem, is unmerciful. Another important distinction exists between these two ancient enemies of Atlantis: ancient Athens, like the old Atlantis, is destroyed by an inundation, whereas ancient Bensalem is not.[55]

According to the Platonic account, Atlantis' destruction by earthquakes is compelled by the Gods;[56] as a result, the continent is lost. The governor-priest, however, allows for the rebirth of Atlantis. Bensalem remembers that since "that whole tract is little subject to earthquakes," Atlantis is actually destroyed "by a particular deluge or inundation" (54); consequently, the continent is lost only temporarily. The contemporary Atlantans, unlike their divine ancestors, are a "simple and savage people" (55). As a result of the inundations, ancient Athens and the old Atlantis are both destroyed. Only Bensalem survives this natural destruction. As a result of this flood, the old Atlantis, a flourishing nation both "mighty and proud" (53), has been reduced to "rudeness and ignorance" (54). With the exception of the (faulty) memory of the Egyptian priest, only Bensalem remembers the events that occur prior to the inundation. Bensalem is unique in her ability to withstand the devastation which is wrought on all other nations.

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[54] Plato, *Timaeus* 24d-25d.

[55] Ibid. 26c-d.

[56] Plato, *Critias* 108e.

Altabin's old Bensalem, the nation which rends the Coyan fleet "without striking stroke" (54), has been supplanted by Solamona's new Bensalem. Once a frequented and known island, Bensalem is now shrouded in secrecy: the new Bensalemites are no longer known and no longer part of the international commercial structure. The regime which battles the old Atlantis no longer exists. New Bensalem, founded on different principles, has different laws and different institutions. The new Bensalem is dedicated to science.

With such an unobvious title, we return to the question at hand—what is the new Atlantis? Since this is an account of Bensalem and the text is called the *New Atlantis*, perhaps Bacon is implying that Bensalem is a new Atlantis.[57] How is Bensalem similar to the old Atlantis? First, both Bensalem and the old Atlantis are said to have their own language (46).[58] Although Bensalemite and Atlantan are presumably different languages, they do point to an important feature of both states: both the people of old Atlantis and those of the new Bensalem are united by their respective dialects, and, as a result, unique from other states. Second, the old Atlantans are renowned for their wealth (53): according to Critias, the Atlantan kings, "amassed more wealth than had ever been amassed before in the reign of any previous kings or could easily be amassed before."[59] The new Bensalemites seem to have accumulated sufficient wealth to ensure that their people do not want for material goods (39, 41, 43, 45). Monetary stability, such that the people of a polity are financially satisfied, points to an advanced regime; if the material necessities are ensured by a state, then the people therein need not be concerned with mere subsistence. Third, both the old Atlantis and Bensalem are said to be self-sufficient: although the old Atlantis imported certain goods, "the island itself provided most of what was needed for their livelihood;"[60] likewise on Bensalem, with the exception of the international dependence on knowledge, Bensalem is able to "maintain itself without any aid at all of the foreigner" (65). Self-sufficiency ensures that a state need not be subject to the whims of other nations. As such, both the old Atlantis and Bensalem are capable of obtaining a degree of autonomy not possible if a regime requires the assistance of other states. Drawing from these three similarities between the old Atlantis and the new Bensalem—namely, linguistic unity, monetary stability, and self-sufficiency—is it possible that the new Bensalem is the new Atlantis?

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[57] Some scholars suggest that Bensalem is the new Atlantis. For example see White 103; Price 3; Lampert, *Nietzsche and Modern Times* 46, 63.

[58] Plato, *Critias* 113a.

[59] Ibid. 114d.

[60] Ibid. 114e.

If Bensalem is the new Atlantis, there are two possible outcomes for the state: first, like the old Atlantis, the new Atlantis is about to be destroyed; or second, unlike the old Atlantis, the new Atlantis has overcome the limitations of its historical predecessor and, with the ideals of Baconian science flourishing, Bensalem will ultimately become imperialistically successful.[61] Both of these interpretations of the new Atlantis hinge on one's understanding of Bensalem. In the first case, that Bensalem is on the verge of destruction is evidenced by two related factors: first, for an unknown reason, the House of Salomon is revoking the laws of secrecy (83); and second, the excess praise which the sailors bestow on the island and islanders is cause for concern. The obvious change in Solamona's policy of secrecy may also be cause for concern: if Bensalem is indeed embarking on an imperial mission—namely, to conquer and subjugate the rest of the world to her will—then the island may indeed "be filled with an unjust lust for possessions and power."[62] Further, like the old Atlantis, Bensalem is lauded throughout the text; praise, however, may be indicative of Bacon's dissembling, not an actual indication of the beauteousness of the island. In that case, drawing from the two aforementioned points, one ought to be awaiting the destruction of this new Atlantis, suggesting that this is not a utopia worthy of imitation and implementation.

In the second option—that Bensalem is not the new Atlantis—there are two important differences between Bensalem and the old Atlantis: Bensalem is praised for her clemency (53); and, Bensalem has the technological power to overcome "Divine Revenge" (54), "accident[s] of time" (55), and "natural revolution[s] of time." Unlike the old Atlantans, who violently undertake their missions, the Bensalemites are praised by the governor-priest for their mercy and leniency. Indeed, throughout the text, the merciful nature of the Bensalemites, both in the past (54) and towards the sailors (39, 60), is emphasized. Moreover, unlike the Atlantans who, as a result of "their inability to bear their great good fortune...became disordered,"[63] the Bensalemites appear to have no such difficulty. According to the narrator's account, the Bensalemites are a civil and orderly people (41, 47, 60, 63, 70). Furthermore, the Bensalemites—with the exception of the advent of Christianity and the permission granted the narrator to publish an account of the island—have maintained the structures which are instituted by Solamona. This brings us to the second point: Bensalem has godlike powers. While the House of Salomon has weapons of unprecedented strength (79-80), if they are guided by compassion, as the Father has suggested is the case, it is unlikely for Bensalem to undertake a military offensive. Rather than overt displays of strength, Bensalem prefers to employ its powers secretly: Bensalem behaves in a more covert and subtle manner than did the old Atlantis. Further, since the Bensalemites are able to "enlarge the bounds of Human Empire, to the effecting of all things possible" (71), they are unlikely to fall victim to the whims of nature or the vicissitudes of things. Bensalem is capable of causing the destruction of the rest of the world, while ensuring her own protection. As a result, if Bensalem is the new Atlantis, the island is unlikely to encounter the same fate as the old Atlantis. Bensalem has overcome the limitations of nature—both human and environmental—and thus has become like a god. Hence, Bensalem need not fear the fate of the old Atlantis, since this new Atlantis, as a result of her science, has control over her future.

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[61] Paterson argues that "the fate suffered by Atlantis is intended to stand for the fate of all nations which do not possess the power over nature which Bensalem derives from its science." Paterson, "Role of Christianity" 432; also see Paterson, "Baconian Science" 269.

[62] Plato, *Critias* 121b.

[63] Ibid.

Unfortunately, there is a fundamental complication in presuming that Bensalem is the new Atlantis: Bensalem is not new.[64] For the last nineteen hundred years, Bensalem has maintained continuous stability. Further, the regime instituted by Salomona is part of a continuous tradition; Bensalem remembers her Abrahamaic ancestry (65), "and that Moses by a secret cabala ordained the laws of Bensalem which they now use." Bensalem, although new to the rest of the world, is the only state that is not new. Comparatively, then, Bensalem is an old state.

If the new Bensalem is not the new Atlantis, one must consider who or what stands in opposition to the ideals of this technological republic, and who or what might wage war against the island. Towards what is Bacon directing his readers? There are two ways of understanding that which might stand against the new science: first, the new Atlantis can be understood geographically—as a physical state which might attempt to impede the supremacy of science; second, the new Atlantis can be understood intellectually—as an ideology which might attempt to impede or circumvent the supremacy of science.

There are three geographic areas specifically identified in the *New Atlantis* as potential adversaries of Bensalem: America, the location of the old Atlantis (52); Europe, the home of the sailors; and Asia, the intended destination of the crew. If the new Atlantis is America, one must attempt to determine the relationship between the people currently inhabiting the area and their divine ancestors. Following the calamity of the old Atlantis, America is repopulated by "the poor remnant of human seed which remained in their mountains" (54). Those who survive the destruction are "not able to leave letters, arts, and civility to their posterity" (55). The current inhabitants of America, if indeed the distant descendants of the old Atlantans, have no memory of the former greatness of their nation. As such, it is unlikely that the Americans have any affinity, other than geography, to connect them to the greatness of the former inhabitants of their land. If the new Atlantis is America, Bacon is not only prophetic in his ability to foresee the rise of America, but he is awaiting a battle that is be waged in the future. Geographical similarities must then suffice as an explanation between the old and new Atlantis.

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[64] In response to the concern that Bensalem is not 'new,' White argues, "It is called 'new' simply because it is intended to be an improvement on the old Atlantis of Plato." White 105.

The second possible location of the new Atlantis is Europe.[65] Throughout the *New Atlantis*, European practices and innovations have been contrasted to those of Bensalem. From the outset, the narrator has drawn a distinction between the superiority of Bensalemite materials and those inferior European materials with which he is familiar:[66] Bensalemite parchment is shinier (38); their brick is bluer (41); their fabric is more daintily constructed, more brightly dyed, and of finer quality (39); and their food and wine are tastier (43). Not only are Bensalemite technologies superior to those of Europe, but their people are also superior: the Jews of Bensalem are of a less rancorous disposition than are their European counterparts (65); Bensalemites respect the sanctity of the family (66-68); and Bensalemites maintain chastity in both mind and body. In addition, unlike Europeans, the Bensalemites have more knowledge of the history and contemporary situation of the rest of the world (50-51). Although Europe is clearly inferior to Bensalem in the aforementioned aspects, Europe remains a political force in the seventeenth century. Elsewhere, Bacon anticipates "this most happy and glorious event, that this island of Britain, divided from all the world, should be united in itself."[67] If Bacon is pointing to Britain as the obstacle to his new science, he appears to be treasonously advocating the destruction of his own regime at the hands of his scientific project. Bacon is anticipating European hostility to his technological republic; Europe may prove a formidable adversary to Baconian science.

The third possible location of the new Atlantis is the East. China and Japan is the intended destination of the crew (37). Solamona's reforms are presented, by the governor-priest, in contrast to those of China. China, like Bensalem, practices isolationism: neither country is open to foreigners. However, unlike Solamona's reforms which prohibit Bensalemite travel abroad, "the Chinese sail where they will or can" (57). According to the governor-priest, the Chinese prohibitions on travel are a result of their "pusillanimity and fear." As a consequence of these laws, the Chinese are "a curious, ignorant, fearful, foolish nation." Given the scathing critique of China's isolationist policies presented in the text, it is unlikely that this is the nation which can challenge Bensalemite science. If China is the new Atlantis, her fate is likely that of the old Atlantis: destruction at the hands of Baconian Science.

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[65] Although Weinberger does not argue that the new Atlantis is Europe, he does state that "the sailing of the men to Bensalem represents the future way of Great Britain to the perfection of science and hence the fulfillment and perfection of human destiny. The history of Britain's future is, therefore, the history of Bensalem." Weinberger, "Science and Rule" 877.

[66] Innes discusses the conveniences of Bensalem's industry at length. Innes 8-10.

[67] Bacon, *Advancement* II.ii.8.

The difficulty in determining that the new Atlantis is, in fact, an existing geographic area, is that one needs to establish the affinity between the old Atlantis and the new Atlantis. Moreover, Bacon does not identify what the new Atlantis *is*; if it is an existing regime, one might expect more guidance in coming to such a conclusion. Since Bacon believes that the matter of government "is a part of knowledge secret and retired,"[68] perhaps one is advised to consider less tangible possibilities. The old Atlantis is the enemy of the old Bensalem. Thus, Atlantis cannot be understood as an ideal towards which a state should strive; Atlantis is a regime which must be overthrown. As in the case of the old Atlantis, which suffers defeat at the hands of a more beauteous regime, the new Atlantis, then, must also be defeated by Bacon's scientific republic.[69]

As previously discussed, religion, politics, and science itself, in their respective desires for supremacy, all impede the Baconian project. One of these competing ruling principles may be the new Atlantis; each of these three ideologies can prove dangerous to the pursuit of natural knowledge and the useful application of this knowledge. Religion, when followed with zealousness, prohibits the study of nature; those with faith seek to convert the entire world in the name of the afterlife. If God has created the natural world, probing into nature necessarily involves probing into divine secrets. Overstepping the bounds of human knowledge is thus sacrilegious. One cannot be a devout believer and partake in Bacon's project. Similarly, the demands of politics, namely the desire for empire, can exploit scientific knowledge to its own ends. What king, other than the Bensalemite monarch, willingly permits the dictates of science to supercede his own supremacy? Science is a danger to political power: technology, if used by a monarch, can be advantageous; alternately, technology, if used against a monarch, can be devastating. Ultimately, as evidenced by Daedalus, the scientist himself is a danger to the dictates of Baconian science. The scientist, if not properly controlled, may attempt to usurp power for himself. As such, the new Atlantis may be any of these competing ideologies; religion, politics, and science are all essential to the Baconian project, but if left unchecked, pose potential dangers to the pursuit of science.

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[68] Ibid. II.xxiii.47.

[69] Although Faulkner argues that the new Atlantis is the scientific regime which Bacon hopes to found, I agree, in principle, that the scientific project need not be limited by geography: "Bacon implies that his teaching can reach to the new world of America from which adventurers, perhaps in new colonies comparatively free of old traditions, proceed further in their conversion to enlightenment....*New Atlantis* implies one comprehensive state of mind, one new world or scientific civilization, but not one world country." Faulkner 123.

On final consideration, we must "pierce the veil"[70] more deeply. It seems clear that the *New Atlantis* is a response to Plato, the author of the old Atlantan dialogues. Plato, however, is most remembered for two other texts: the *Laws* and the *Republic*. In the *Republic*, Plato presents another "poetical and fabulous" (53) regime: the city in speech. In the *Critias*, the old Atlantis is described by Critias; the city in speech, however, is presented by Socrates. Although this is a topic of considerable interest, it is worthy of consideration unto itself; as such, it is the task of another undertaking.

Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis* points to a coming battle: one waged between Baconian science and regnant ideologies. While this battle may not be waged with weapons, it must, at the very least, be waged in the minds of men. Although Bacon extols the new science, he is well aware that the advent of the scientific project is not without casualties; religion, politics, and science must all be united in the name of Human Empire. The precarious balance between these three competing ideologies must be maintained and continually revised; a state cannot take science for granted, but must maintain constant vigilance in the pursuit of human knowledge. Moderns, with our zealous faith in scientific truths, have forgotten the potential dangers that Bacon has foreseen with the coming science. We are satisfied with comfort, but not with order. We no longer ensure that science is monitored vigilantly. Poised for the inevitable battle to be waged in the name of Bacon's project, and armed with knowledge of this technological republic, we sail from Bensalem.

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[70] Bacon, *Advancement* II.xvii.5.

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